

ATTACHMENT B
Responses to Comments



Responses to Comments for the Draft Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration

(State Clearinghouse No. 2013061036)

for

San Diego Gas & Electric Company
TL 637 Wood-to-Steel Replacement Project
(Application No. A 13-03-003)

January 2014

Prepared for:
California Public Utilities Commission
Energy Division
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, California 94102

Prepared by:
DUDEK

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1. INTRODUCTION

This attachment provides responses to comments received during the Draft Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) for the San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) Tie-Line 637 Wood-to-Steel Replacement Project public review period, which began on October 8, 2013, and ended on November 7, 2013. Detailed responses are provided to individual comments in Section 4, which also provides copies of comments submitted on the Draft IS/MND.

2. COMMENT LETTERS RECEIVED

Table 1-1 provides an index of all comment letters received and corresponding numbered responses. Comment letters are organized by category and then chronologically in the order the letter was received. Each letter is assigned a letter designation, and each comment within that letter is numbered. Comment letters, bracketed by comment, are reproduced in their entirety and are followed by responses to each comment. Changes to the IS/MND, where deemed appropriate, are summarized in the response and refer to the applicable section in the IS/MND. Text changes are indicated with ~~strikethrough~~/underline. Text changes are also provided in the Final MND.

Table 1-1: Index to Comment Letters and Responses to Comments		
Comment Letter Designation	Agency/Respondent and Date of Letter	Response Designations
<i>Federal Agencies</i>		
A1	Department of the Army, Los Angeles District Corps of Engineers, Regulatory Division – Carlsbad Field Office	A1-1–A1-8
<i>State Agencies</i>		
B1	California Department of Transportation	B1-1–B1-2
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B3	State Clearinghouse	B3-1
<i>Local Agencies</i>		
C1	County of San Diego, Planning & Development Services	C1-1–C1-11
<i>Public Participation/Individuals</i>		
D1	The Protect Our Communities Foundation	D1-1–D1-5
D2	San Diego Sierra Club	D2-1–D2-10
<i>Applicant</i>		
E1	SDG&E	E1-1 – E-18
<i>Late Comment</i>		
F1	The Protect Our Communities Foundation	F1-1

3. PUBLIC MEETING

To help understand the proposed project and to obtain public comments on the IS/MND, the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) held a public meeting on October 17, 2013, at the Ramona Community Center, located at 434 Aqua Lane, Ramona, California, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. At the public meeting, the environmental team and CPUC staff was available to discuss the environmental document and to obtain public comments on the environmental document. Attendees were provided with comment cards and contact information with the option to submit comments at a later date.

4. RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

Responses to comments follow this page.

Comment Letter A1



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
Los Angeles District Corps of Engineers
Regulatory Division-Carlsbad Field Office
5900 La Place Court, Suite 100
Carlsbad, CA 92008

October 31, 2013

REPLY TO:
ATTENTION OF:
Office of the Chief
Regulatory Division

Mr. Lon Payne
California Public Utilities Commission
Energy Division
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, California 94102

SUBJECT: Information regarding requirement for Department of the Army Permit

Dear Mr. Payne:

This is in response to information received regarding San Diego Gas & Electric Tie-Line 637 Wood-to-Steel Replacement Project. Based on the information you have provided, we are unable to determine if the proposed work would be regulated under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act or Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act. Please review your project and determine if you need a permit.

Applications and additional information are available on our website <http://www.spl.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory/PermitProcess.aspx>. If you have any questions, please contact Shari Johnson of my staff at 760-602-4829 or via e-mail at Shari.Johnson@usace.army.mil.

Sincerely,

Therese O. Bradford
Chief, South Coast Branch

A1-1

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Response to Comment Letter A1

**Department of the Army
Los Angeles District Corps of Engineers
Regulatory Division – Carlsbad Field Office
Therese Bradford
October 31, 2013**

- A1-1** SDG&E, the project applicant, will be responsible for obtaining all necessary permits for the project. Section 1.10, Table 1-1 of the Draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration identifies permits that are anticipated to be required for the proposed project, and indicates that the project would be covered under the non-notifying Nationwide Permit No. 12 of the Clean Water Act Section 404. The project is located in the foothills of San Diego County, between the communities of Ramona and Santa Ysabel, and would not involve waters that are considered navigable or tidally influenced under Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act.

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Comment Letter B1

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—CALIFORNIA STATE TRANSPORTATION AGENCY

EDMUND G. BROWN Jr., Governor

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

DISTRICT 11, DIVISION OF PLANNING
4050 TAYLOR ST, M.S. 240
SAN DIEGO, CA 92110
PHONE (619) 688-6960
FAX (619) 688-4299
TTY 711



Flex your power!
Be energy efficient!

October 31, 2013

11-SD-8-78-79-67-94
PM Various
SDGE Wood to Steel Pole Replacement
SCH 2013101027

Lon Payne
California Public Utilities Commission, Energy Division
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear Mr. Payne:

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) received a copy of the Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) (SCH 2013101027) for the SDGE Wood to Steel Pole Replacement project. We have the following comments:

Any work performed within Caltrans right-of-way (R/W) will require an encroachment permit. Please refer to Caltrans Encroachment Permits Manual (http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/developserv/permits/encroachment_permits_manual/index.html) for guidance on utility encroachment.

Guidance for utility encroachment is contained in Chapter 600, Table 6.7 (page 6-35) of the Encroachment Permit Manual.

Additional information regarding encroachment permits may be obtained by contacting the Caltrans Permits Office at (619) 688-6158. Early coordination with Caltrans is strongly advised for all encroachment permits.

As part of the encroachment permit process, the applicant must provide an approved final environmental document including the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) determination addressing any environmental impacts within the Caltrans' R/W, and any corresponding technical studies. If these materials are not included with the encroachment permit application, the applicant will be required to acquire and provide these to Caltrans before the permit application will be accepted. Identification of avoidance and/or mitigation measures will be a condition of the encroachment permit approval as well as procurement of any necessary regulatory and resource agency permits. Encroachment permit submittals that are incomplete can result in significant delays in permit approval.

B1-1

"Caltrans improves mobility across California"

Mr. Payne
October 31, 2013
Page 2

If you have any questions on the comments Caltrans has provided, please contact Roger Sanchez of the Development Review Branch at (619) 688-6494.

↑ B1-1
Cont.

Sincerely,



JACOB M. ARMSTRONG, Chief
Development Review Branch

c: Dudek, Dylan Duverge

"Caltrans improves mobility across California"

Response to Comment Letter B1

**California Department of Transportation
Jacob Armstrong
October 31, 2013**

- B1-1** This comment is noted. Section 1.10, Table 1-1 of the Draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) identifies permits required for the proposed project, including an encroachment permit from the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). Table 1 in the MND and Table 4-6 in Section 4 in the IS list Applicant Proposed Measures (APM), including APM-TRA-2 which states that SDG&E, the project applicant, will be responsible for obtaining the required encroachment permits from Caltrans.

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State of California – Natural Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
South Coast Region
3883 Ruffin Road
San Diego, CA 92123
(858) 467-4201
www.wildlife.ca.gov

EDMUND G. BROWN JR., Governor
CHARLTON H. BONHAM, Director



NOV 07 2013

November 4, 2013

Mr. Lon Payne
California Public Utilities Commission, c/o Dudek
605 Third Street
Encinitas, California 92024

Subject: Comments on the Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the San Diego Gas & Electric Tie-Line 637 Wood-to-Steel Replacement Project (Application No. 13-03-003; SCH# 2013101027)

Dear Mr. Payne:

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) has reviewed the Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the San Diego Gas & Electric Tie-Line 637 Wood-to-Steel Replacement Project, dated October 8, 2013. The comments provided herein are based on information provided in the draft Initial Study and MND and the Proponent's Environmental Assessment (PEA).

The Department is a Trustee Agency and a Responsible Agency pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA; §§15386 and 15381, respectively) and is responsible for ensuring appropriate conservation of the state's biological resources, including rare, threatened, and endangered plant and animal species, pursuant to the California Endangered Species Act (Fish and Game Code §2050 et seq.) and other sections of the Fish and Game Code. The Department also administers the Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP) program. San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) participates in the NCCP program by implementing its approved Subregional NCCP.

The project proposes to fire-harden approximately 14 miles of the existing 69-kilovolt (kV) wood pole power line (TL 637) between the Creelman and Santa Ysabel Substations. SDG&E's purpose for the project is to increase fire safety and service reliability of the 69 kV power line in a high fire risk area of San Diego County. As proposed by SDG&E, the project would fire-harden the existing system by replacing the existing 69 kV wood pole structures with weathered steel pole structures. Work would also be conducted at the Creelman and Santa Ysabel Substations to allow for the wood-to-steel conversions of TL 637. Further, SDG&E is proposing to install a new SDG&E-owned and operated fiber-optic cable between the substations on the new TL 637 steel poles. The 14-mile span of the TL 637 route proposed for fire-hardening is located on private and public lands within a central portion of unincorporated San Diego County, California, specifically within the Ramona and Santa Ysabel communities.

We offer the following comments and recommendations to assist the California Public Utilities Commission in avoiding, minimizing, and adequately mitigating project-related impacts to biological resources, and to ensure that the project is consistent with ongoing regional habitat conservation planning efforts.

1. Both the Initial Study and PEA Appendix 4.4-A note that the California Natural Diversity Data Base lists several records of occurrence and Critical Habitat Areas for arroyo toad (*Anaxyrus*

B2-1

Conserving California's Wildlife Since 1870

Mr. Lon Payne
California Public Utilities Commission, c/o Dudek
November 4, 2013
Page 2 of 2

californicus) located within 3 miles of the ROW, that no suitable breeding habitat occurs within the ROW, and that based on the results of surveys performed for the PEA, pasture grazing and development have removed potential habitat for this species from the ROW. Please clarify if these surveys included upland estivating habitat since, as stated in Appendix 4.4-A, individuals have been observed up to 2 kilometers from the streams in which they breed. Because the species is considered absent for impact analysis under the Initial Study, potential impacts to estivating (or other non-breeding) individuals may be overlooked if potential non-breeding habitat was not surveyed.

2. For all surveys as stated in the Initial Study and per the SDG&E Subregional NCCP, verification surveys are required if surface disturbance has not commenced within 30 days of the submittal of the Preactivity Study Report to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the Department. The Biological Technical Report is dated December 2012 and some surveys were apparently performed in March 2013, both of which the Department considers outdated and recommends that either updates to the surveys of more transitional elements (wildlife species and annual plants) be performed for this project, or additional justification should be provided why updated biological surveys are not deemed necessary in order to minimize potential impacts to sensitive species.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the referenced MND. Questions regarding this letter and further coordination on these issues should be directed to Eric Hollenbeck at (858- 467-2720) or Eric.Hollenbeck@wildlife.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Gail K. Sevens
Environmental Program Manager
South Coast Region

cc: Scott Morgan (State Clearinghouse)

B2-1
Cont.

B2-2

Response to Comment Letter B2

California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Gail Sevens

November 4, 2013

B2-1 The Biological Resources section (Section 5.5) of the Draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) was based on a biological technical report prepared by Chambers Group in December 2012 in support of the TL 637 Wood-to-Steel Replacement Project. In this report Chambers Group references focused surveys conducted for arroyo toad (*Anaxyrus californicus*; ARTO) in 2010 in areas that were identified as suitable for toads (Chambers Group 2011). Chambers Group (2011) states:

“Chamber Group biologists conducted a helicopter survey of the Project Area to determine where species-specific surveys should be conducted (see Section 2.1 for Habitat Assessment). Areas identified as ARTO ‘suitable’ habitat within CNF [Cleveland National Forest] models were included in the review. The Survey Area is a 150-foot buffer around transmission/distribution pole centerlines and was extended to a 250-foot radius around each pole where the overhead line makes an angle greater than 2 degrees. The additional buffer is to include potential additional work space that is typically required during operation and maintenance work at angle points within the overhead lines. Survey Areas are identified first by geographical locations within the county and are also referenced by the associated transmission/distribution line. These areas are then further refined to individual drainages that are surveyed and are graphically depicted on an accompanying aerial mapbook. One master mapbook was created for the entire Project Area; however, due to its size only the relevant mapbook pages are included in this report.” (p. 1)

“Surveys were conducted in areas suitable for ARTO breeding (sandy substrates, stream edges not completely choked by vegetation, and the presence of braided channels and sand bars). The surveys were conducted in segment areas that intersected the 250-foot radius and/or 150-foot buffer around all poles and transmission/distribution centerlines. Surveys were also conducted in suitable breeding areas that were immediately adjacent to the survey area, such as in situations where the drainages continue immediately outside the survey area, or areas where the drainages exist directly parallel to the survey areas. In some locations, surveys were conducted up to 1,000 feet upstream and downstream of the survey segment area. Photographs were taken of the survey segments, and all amphibians species observed or heard vocalizing were recorded.” (p. 4)

For preparation of the IS/MND, the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) and their environmental consultant performed their own analysis based on the results of the Chambers Group survey effort, knowledge of the area and the biology of the arroyo toad, and available data. The focused survey effort was conducted in

accordance with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) protocols, which is the official protocol used for arroyo toad surveys. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) does not have their own arroyo toad protocol but instead accepts the results of surveys conducted in accordance with the USFWS protocol. CDFW considers the arroyo toad to be a Species of Special Concern, while the USFWS lists the species as endangered. No comments were received from USFWS on the effort or analysis during the public comment period; therefore, the results and conclusions are considered acceptable.

There are four general areas within 5 miles of the right-of-way (ROW) where USFWS and California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) arroyo toad occurrences are located.

Area 1: The first of these areas is located between approximately 2 and 4.75 miles (3.2 and 7.6 kilometers (km)) west and southwest of Santa Ysabel Substation. There are approximately five USFWS and CNDDDB occurrences within this area. The last dates on which arroyo toad was observed occurred in June 2010, September 2002, April 1998, and May 1991. All except one occurrence (CNDDDB No. 62) remain to the north of the ROW and north of Julian Road, a highly traveled road. Occurrence No. 62 crosses the ROW approximately 2.5 miles (4 km) southwest of Santa Ysabel Substation and extends approximately 0.35 mile (0.56 km) southeast past the ROW and approximately 3 miles (4.8 km) northwest of the ROW; however, this CNDDDB occurrence did not have specific location information and, as a result, most of the Witch Creek above Santa Ysabel Creek was mapped as an occurrence. Along Witch Creek associated with occurrence No. 62, one toad was collected in 1935 and two egg masses were found in May 1991.

Chambers Group (2011) specifically describes the survey area including the portion of occurrence No. 62 and extending north along the ROW (see Map MS-019 – available at [http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/environment/info/dudek/WoodtoSteel/Q4.4-12\(C\)Final_ARTO_Report_for_the_CNF_Project.pdf](http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/environment/info/dudek/WoodtoSteel/Q4.4-12(C)Final_ARTO_Report_for_the_CNF_Project.pdf)). They conclude, “The Survey Area depicted on Map MS-019 had a deeply incised, narrow drainage with a steep gradient drop, surrounded by chamise chaparral. The drainage contained no water except where a small spring flows intermittently into a stock pond towards the southwest of the Survey Area. Therefore, this site was not considered suitable arroyo toad breeding or upland habitat, as no streams are present. Surveys were discontinued in this area.” (Chambers Group 2011, p. 7)

In addition to Chambers Group’s observations, several mountain ridges approximately 3,000 to 3,200 feet AMSL may provide a barrier between these observed locations and the ROW (National Geographic Society 2009). Arroyo toad are anticipated to range between 0 and 3,000 feet AMSL (Californiaherps.com 2013).

Possible suitable habitat in this area includes the San Diego River located south and parallel to the ROW. However, this river is bounded by the Dye Mountains to its north, a steep mountain range which provides a barrier to arroyo toad movement up

to the ROW. A second possible suitable habitat includes an unknown river or stream located approximately 0.6 mile (0.97 km) south of Santa Ysabel substation which crosses the ROW and terminates approximately 0.15 mile past the ROW to the south. As stated above, mountain ranges between observed occurrences and the ROW may provide a barrier to arroyo toad movement into the ROW.

Area 2: The second of these areas occurs approximately 2 to 5 miles (3.2 to 8 km) south of the ROW at Sawday Truck Trail. There are approximately six USFWS and CNDDDB occurrences within this area. The last dates on which arroyo toad was observed occurred in June 2010, May 2007, 2003, and March 1993. All occurrences are located to the south of the ROW and directly along the San Diego River. The survey area mapped by Chambers Group (2011) in this location (see Map MS-017 – available at [http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/environment/info/dudek/WoodtoSteel/Q4.4-12\(C\)Final_ARTO_Report_for_the_CNF_Project.pdf](http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/environment/info/dudek/WoodtoSteel/Q4.4-12(C)Final_ARTO_Report_for_the_CNF_Project.pdf)) was described as “flat, grazed grassland pasture. No streams or creeks were present; the closest water in the immediate area was a 2-acre pond approximately 1-mile north of the closest distribution pole. Therefore, this site was not considered suitable ARTO breeding or upland habitat, as no streams are present. Surveys were discontinued in this area” (p. 7). One large barrier between the San Diego River observations and the ROW include the Dye Mountains which rise steeply from the San Diego River from approximately 830 feet AMSL and reaches an elevation of approximately 3,200 feet AMSL (National Geographic Society 2009).

The northeastern end of San Vicente Creek is located approximately 0.1 mile from the ROW. This creek, along with possible habitat sources within Dye Canyon adjacent to the ROW, Wash Hallow Creek north of the ROW, and Swartz Canyon farther south along the ROW, may provide suitable habitat for arroyo toad; however, it is anticipated that mitigation measures would ensure the species’ safety if observed at any location along the ROW.

Area 3: The third area occurs approximately 2.3 to 5 miles (3.7 to 8 km) southwest of Creelman Substation. There are approximately four USFWS and CNDDDB occurrences within this area. The last dates on which arroyo toad was observed occurred in May 2008, 2003, April 1997, and April 1992. Three additional occurrences in this area occur approximately 5.7 miles (9 km) southwest of Creelman Substation and are dated May 2008, 2003, and April 1993. All observations occurred along San Vicente Creek. Within 5 miles of the ROW, San Vicente Creek is approximately 810 feet AMSL near Fernbrook (approximately 5 miles southwest of the substation) and heads in a northeast direction up to Spangler Peak and San Vicente Road where it verges on an eastward path. Creelman Substation and the ROW is located to the north of Spangler Peak with San Vicente Creek to the south. This creek may represent suitable habitat for the arroyo toad; however, Spangler Peak at 1,980 feet AMSL and surrounded to the north and west by several slightly lower in elevation peaks (approximately 1,700 feet AMSL). Although these ranges are well within arroyo toad habitat, the directional flow of Vicente Creek to the east and a mountain range directly between the creek and the

ROW suggest that suitable habitat would be located on the southern side of the ranges. Smaller unnamed creeks and rivers within the vicinity may provide suitable habitat; however, as stated earlier, it is anticipated that mitigation measures would ensure the species' safety if observed at any location along the ROW. Agriculture/Orchards were mapped directly adjacent to Creelman Substation and the City of Ramona is directly northwest of this location. As stated in the Initial Study (p. 5.5-26), "pasture grazing and development have removed potential habitat for this species from the ROW."

Area 4: Lastly, the fourth area occurs approximately 4.4 to 6 miles (7.1 to 9.7 km) northwest of Creelman Substation. There are approximately eight USFWS and CNDDDB occurrences within this area. The last dates on which arroyo toad was observed occurred in April 2008, March 2005, April 2005, June 2005, May 2001, April 1999, May 1999, and May 1998. All observations occurred along Santa Maria Creek which runs to the northern boundaries of the City of Ramona and heads in a northeastern direction away from Creelman Substation. The City of Ramona lies directly between these observations and Creelman Substation. A barrier from the ROW to these observations includes the developed City of Ramona and pasture grazing activities.

Overall, Chambers Group (2011) describes the survey habitat conditions between Ramona to Santa Ysabel as follows:

"The Survey Areas along TL 637 were located south of SR [State Route] 78 from the Ramona area to Santa Ysabel. Surveys were conducted at locations where TL 637 crosses unnamed creeks in Swartz Canyon and Dye Canyon as depicted on Maps MS-015, -017, -019, and -021. Much of the terrain is composed of steep walled valleys and canyons running in a southwesterly direction. The western most Survey Area (Map MS-015) was composed primarily of southern coast live oak riparian forest and riparian scrub surrounded by chamise chaparral. The stream was approximately 200 feet from the closest distribution pole. Water flow was intermittent and appeared to be a first or second order stream with large boulders, cobble, with minimal sand/gravel with a mud and silt substrate. The drainage was deeply incised, usually less than three feet, with steep banks, steep gradient, no terracing, and a minimal floodplain. Dense riparian vegetation advanced up to the edge of stream flow. The upland habitat was comprised of non-friable soils unsuitable for burrowing. Therefore, this area was not considered suitable ARTO breeding habitat, and surveys in this area were discontinued." (pp. 6–7)

Overall, the project will be associated with minor habitat disturbances. For example, as described in the Project Description, no new access roads would be required during construction; equipment crossing drainages (if needed) would lift equipment blades to avoid impacts during crossing; and no grading is anticipated in work areas. In addition, all construction activities are expected to last approximately 9 months with several crews working simultaneously.

In addition, the following Applicant Proposed Measure (APM) and mitigation measures (MM) would further protect arroyo toad in the event that they were to occur within the ROW: APM-BIO-1 (which includes SDG&E Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP) Operational Protocols), MM BIO-2, and MM BIO-3.

- B2-2** This comment is noted. SDG&E will be required to adhere to their Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Communities Conservation Plan (HCP/NCCP) that will require a variety of measures prior to and during construction. Adherence to the SDG&E Subregional NCCP Operational Protocols is described in APM-BIO-1, as provided in the MND (pages MND-3 and MND-4) and in Section 4.0, Project Description, of the Draft IS/MND. In addition, adherence to APM-BIO-1 is further noted on in Section 5.5 of the IS/MND on pages 5.5-36, 5.5-38, 5.5-41, 5.5-45, 5.5-48, and 5.5-52.

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Comment Letter B3



Edmund G. Brown Jr.
Governor

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
Governor's Office of Planning and Research
State Clearinghouse and Planning Unit



Ken Alex
Director

November 7, 2013

Lon Payne
California Public Utilities Commission
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102-3298

Subject: San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) Tie-Line 637 Wood-to-Steel Replacement Project
SCH#: 2013101027

Dear Lon Payne:

The State Clearinghouse submitted the above named Mitigated Negative Declaration to selected state agencies for review. On the enclosed Document Details Report please note that the Clearinghouse has listed the state agencies that reviewed your document. The review period closed on November 6, 2013, and the comments from the responding agency (ies) is (are) enclosed. If this comment package is not in order, please notify the State Clearinghouse immediately. Please refer to the project's ten-digit State Clearinghouse number in future correspondence so that we may respond promptly.

Please note that Section 21104(c) of the California Public Resources Code states that:

"A responsible or other public agency shall only make substantive comments regarding those activities involved in a project which are within an area of expertise of the agency or which are required to be carried out or approved by the agency. Those comments shall be supported by specific documentation."

These comments are forwarded for use in preparing your final environmental document. Should you need more information or clarification of the enclosed comments, we recommend that you contact the commenting agency directly.

This letter acknowledges that you have complied with the State Clearinghouse review requirements for draft environmental documents, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act. Please contact the State Clearinghouse at (916) 445-0613 if you have any questions regarding the environmental review process.

Sincerely,

Scott Morgan
Director, State Clearinghouse

Enclosures

cc: Resources Agency

1400 TENTH STREET P.O. BOX 3044 SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95812-3044
TEL (916) 445-0613 FAX (916) 323-3018 www.opr.ca.gov

B3-1

**Document Details Report
State Clearinghouse Data Base**

SCH# 2013101027
Project Title San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) Tie-Line 637 Wood-to-Steel Replacement Project
Lead Agency Public Utilities Commission

Type MND Mitigated Negative Declaration

Description The proposed project is located in north San Diego County between the communities of Ramona and Santa Ysabel, California. The proposed project consists of fire-hardening an approximately 14-mile span of the Tie-Line (TL) 637 corridor connecting SDG&E's existing Creelman and Santa Ysabel Substations. Primary project components include the replacement of 156 existing wood tie-line support structures with fire-safe steel poles within the TL 637 right-of-way corridor, minor improvements to the Creelman and Santa Ysabel Substations, and the installation of a new fiber-optic line that would be co-located on the new TL 637 steel poles. Implementation of the proposed fire-hardening improvements would help ensure SDG&E service reliability during wildlife events and improve fire safety conditions consistent with SDG&E's Community Fire Safety Program (CFSP), County of San Diego Fire Department goals, and safety objectives of the agencies and municipalities within the SDG&E service area.

Lead Agency Contact

Name Lon Payne
Agency California Public Utilities Commission
Phone 415 703 3175 **Fax**
email
Address 505 Van Ness Avenue
City San Francisco **State** CA **Zip** 94102-3298

Project Location

County San Diego
City
Region
Lat / Long
Cross Streets SR 78, Creelman Ln, Arena Wy, Oak Hallow Rd, Littlepage Rd.
Parcel No. Multiple
Township 12,13S **Range** 1-3E **Section** varies **Base** SBB&M

Proximity to:

Highways SR 78 and 79
Airports Jacumba
Railways
Waterways San Diego River
Schools Barnett ES, Olive Pierce MS, Ramona HS
Land Use Undeveloped Land/Rural Residential; Zoning: Limited Agriculture (A70), General Agriculture (A72), Open Space (S80), and General Rural (S92); GP: Rural, Semi-rural, Open Space - Recreation, Public Agency lands

Project Issues Aesthetic/Visual; Agricultural Land; Air Quality; Archaeologic-Historic; Drainage/Absorption; Flood Plain/Flooding; Forest Land/Fire Hazard; Geologic/Seismic; Minerals; Noise; Population/Housing Balance; Public Services; Recreation/Parks; Schools/Universities; Soil Erosion/Compaction/Grading; Solid Waste; Toxic/Hazardous; Traffic/Circulation; Vegetation; Water Quality; Water Supply; Wetland/Riparian; Wildlife; Landuse; Cumulative Effects

Reviewing Agencies Resources Agency; Department of Fish and Wildlife, Region 5; Department of Parks and Recreation; Caltrans, Division of Aeronautics; California Highway Patrol; Caltrans, District 11; Air Resources Board; Regional Water Quality Control Board, Region 9; Native American Heritage Commission; Public Utilities Commission

B3-1
Cont.

**Document Details Report
State Clearinghouse Data Base**

Date Received 10/08/2013 *Start of Review* 10/08/2013 *End of Review* 11/06/2013

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B3-1
Cont.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DISTRICT 11, DIVISION OF PLANNING
4050 TAYLOR ST. M.S. 240
SAN DIEGO, CA 92110
PHONE (619) 688-6960
FAX (619) 688-4299
TTY 711



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October 31, 2013

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E

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OCT 31 2013

STATE CLEARING HOUSE

11-SD-8-78-79-67-94

PM Various

SDGE Wood to Steel Pole Replacement

SCH 2013101027

Lon Payne
California Public Utilities Commission, Energy Division
505 Van Ness Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94102

Dear Mr. Payne:

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) received a copy of the Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) (SCH 2013101027) for the SDGE Wood to Steele Pole Replacement project. We have the following comments:

Any work performed within Caltrans right-of-way (R/W) will require an encroachment permit. Please refer to Caltrans Encroachment Permits Manual (http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/developserv/permits/encroachment_permits_manual/index.html) for guidance on utility encroachment.

Guidance for utility encroachment is contained in Chapter 600, Table 6.7 (page 6-35) of the Encroachment Permit Manual.

Additional information regarding encroachment permits may be obtained by contacting the Caltrans Permits Office at (619) 688-6158. Early coordination with Caltrans is strongly advised for all encroachment permits.

As part of the encroachment permit process, the applicant must provide an approved final environmental document including the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) determination addressing any environmental impacts within the Caltrans' R/W, and any corresponding technical studies. If these materials are not included with the encroachment permit application, the applicant will be required to acquire and provide these to Caltrans before the permit application will be accepted. Identification of avoidance and/or mitigation measures will be a condition of the encroachment permit approval as well as procurement of any necessary regulatory and resource agency permits. Encroachment permit submittals that are incomplete can result in significant delays in permit approval.

"Caltrans improves mobility across California"

Mr. Payne
October 31, 2013
Page 2

If you have any questions on the comments Caltrans has provided, please contact Roger Sanchez of the Development Review Branch at (619) 688-6494.

Sincerely,



JACOB M. ARMSTRONG, Chief
Development Review Branch

c: Dudek, Dylan Duverge

"Caltrans improves mobility across California"



State of California – Natural Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
South Coast Region
3883 Ruffin Road
San Diego, CA 92123
(858) 467-4201
www.wildlife.ca.gov

EDMUND G. BROWN JR., Governor
CHARLTON H. BONHAM, Director



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STATE CLEARING HOUSE

November 4, 2013

Mr. Lon Payne
California Public Utilities Commission, c/o Dudek
605 Third Street
Encinitas, California 92024

Subject: Comments on the Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the San Diego Gas & Electric Tie-Line 637 Wood-to-Steel Replacement Project (Application No. 13-03-003; SCH# 2013101027)

Dear Mr. Payne:

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) has reviewed the Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the San Diego Gas & Electric Tie-Line 637 Wood-to-Steel Replacement Project, dated October 8, 2013. The comments provided herein are based on information provided in the draft Initial Study and MND and the Proponent's Environmental Assessment (PEA).

The Department is a Trustee Agency and a Responsible Agency pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA; §§15386 and 15381, respectively) and is responsible for ensuring appropriate conservation of the state's biological resources, including rare, threatened, and endangered plant and animal species, pursuant to the California Endangered Species Act (Fish and Game Code §2050 et seq.) and other sections of the Fish and Game Code. The Department also administers the Natural Community Conservation Planning (NCCP) program. San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) participates in the NCCP program by implementing its approved Subregional NCCP.

The project proposes to fire-harden approximately 14 miles of the existing 69-kilovolt (kV) wood pole power line (TL 637) between the Creelman and Santa Ysabel Substations. SDG&E's purpose for the project is to increase fire safety and service reliability of the 69 kV power line in a high fire risk area of San Diego County. As proposed by SDG&E, the project would fire-harden the existing system by replacing the existing 69 kV wood pole structures with weathered steel pole structures. Work would also be conducted at the Creelman and Santa Ysabel Substations to allow for the wood-to-steel conversions of TL 637. Further, SDG&E is proposing to install a new SDG&E-owned and operated fiber-optic cable between the substations on the new TL 637 steel poles. The 14-mile span of the TL 637 route proposed for fire-hardening is located on private and public lands within a central portion of unincorporated San Diego County, California, specifically within the Ramona and Santa Ysabel communities.

We offer the following comments and recommendations to assist the California Public Utilities Commission in avoiding, minimizing, and adequately mitigating project-related impacts to biological resources, and to ensure that the project is consistent with ongoing regional habitat conservation planning efforts.

1. Both the Initial Study and PEA Appendix 4.4-A note that the California Natural Diversity Data Base lists several records of occurrence and Critical Habitat Areas for arroyo toad (*Anaxyrus*

Conserving California's Wildlife Since 1870

Mr. Lon Payne
California Public Utilities Commission, c/o Dudek
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Page 2 of 2

californicus) located within 3 miles of the ROW, that no suitable breeding habitat occurs within the ROW, and that based on the results of surveys performed for the PEA, pasture grazing and development have removed potential habitat for this species from the ROW. Please clarify if these surveys included upland estivating habitat since, as stated in Appendix 4.4-A, individuals have been observed up to 2 kilometers from the streams in which they breed. Because the species is considered absent for impact analysis under the Initial Study, potential impacts to estivating (or other non-breeding) individuals may be overlooked if potential non-breeding habitat was not surveyed.

2. For all surveys as stated in the Initial Study and per the SDG&E Subregional NCCP, verification surveys are required if surface disturbance has not commenced within 30 days of the submittal of the Preactivity Study Report to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the Department. The Biological Technical Report is dated December 2012 and some surveys were apparently performed in March 2013, both of which the Department considers outdated and recommends that either updates to the surveys of more transitional elements (wildlife species and annual plants) be performed for this project, or additional justification should be provided why updated biological surveys are not deemed necessary in order to minimize potential impacts to sensitive species.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the referenced MND. Questions regarding this letter and further coordination on these issues should be directed to Eric Hollenbeck at (858- 467-2720) or Eric.Hollenbeck@wildlife.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Gail K. Sevens
Environmental Program Manager
South Coast Region

cc: Scott Morgan (State Clearinghouse)

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Response to Comment Letter B3

**Governor's Office of Planning and Research,
State Clearinghouse and Planning Unit**

Scott Morgan

November 7, 2013

- B3-1** This letter, acknowledging compliance with the State Clearinghouse review requirements for draft environmental documents, is noted. The State Clearinghouse forwarded letters from the California Department of Transportation and California Department of Fish and Wildlife. These letters were also sent by the agencies and are included herein (see comment letters B1 and B2, respectively).

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County of San Diego
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

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November 7, 2013

Lon Payne
Project Manager
California Public Utilities Commission, c/o Dudek
605 Third Street
Encinitas, CA 92024
Via email to TL637woodtosteel@dudek.com

**COMMENTS ON THE NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A MITIGATED NEGATIVE
DECLARATION FOR THE SAN DIEGO GAS & ELECTRIC TIE LINE 637 WOOD-TO-
STEEL REPLACEMENT PROJECT**

Dear Mr. Payne:

The County of San Diego (County) has received and reviewed the Draft Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) Tie Line 637 Wood-To-Steel Replacement Project, dated October 2013, and appreciates this opportunity to comment. The County Departments of Planning & Development Services, Parks and Recreation, and Public Works have comments that identify potentially significant environmental issues that may have an effect on the unincorporated lands of San Diego County.

GENERAL COMMENTS

1. The Draft Initial Study and MND states the project would include 147 pole replacements and fiber optic line installation along approximately 12.3 miles within the unincorporated area of the County. The County's Land Use and Environment Group has developed Guidelines for Determining Significance that are used to determine the significance of environmental impacts and mitigation options for addressing potentially significant impacts in the unincorporated portions of the County. Project impacts that could have potentially significant

C1-1

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November 7, 2013

Page 2

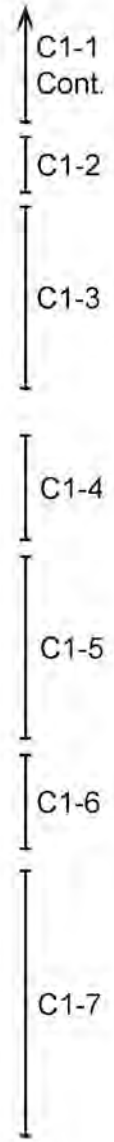
adverse effects to the unincorporated County or County facilities should be evaluated using the County's Guidelines for Determining Significance. These guidelines are available online at: <http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/dplu/procguid.html#guide>.

2. The project description should include a discussion of project phasing details.
3. The MND includes various applicant proposed mitigation measures that were included as part of the Proponent's Environmental Assessment (PEA); however, many of these measures were not carried over as mitigation measures in the MND. The MND should include specific rationale as to why certain applicant proposed mitigation measures were not included as MND mitigation measures. All feasible mitigation measures should be included in the project MND.

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

4. Throughout the Initial Study, references to the North County Multiple Species Conservation Plan (MSCP) and the East County MSCP should be revised to state "Draft North County Plan" and "Draft East County Plan".
5. In Section 5.5.1.5 (Preserve Areas), County staff recommends the following text revisions to the last sentence of second paragraph: "The ~~City~~ County of San Diego has prepared the North and East County MSCP Plans... to ensure the long-term survival of species and habitats in the region ~~the California gnatcatcher and other sensitive coastal sage scrub dependent plant and animal species in accordance with state-sanctioned NCCP program guidelines, as well as other species and habitats in the region.~~"
6. Section 5.5.2 (Regulatory Setting), North County Multiple Species Conservation Plan should note that the North County MSCP is still under development.
7. As stated in the Initial Study (Section 4.6 Construction Activities, Access), temporary construction work areas including the temporary staging area located in Simon Preserve outside of the SDG&E right-of-way shall be restored through vegetation planting and propagation or reseeded. Applicant proposed measures should detail where native plants and seeds will be collected or purchased.

Planting stock should be grown from locally collected plant stock and provided from a qualified nursery. Plants and seeds should originate from within 25 miles of the project area to the extent feasible. Seed should be obtained from a qualified supplier.



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Page 3

RECREATION

- | | | |
|-----|--|-------|
| 8. | APM-HAZ-4, Coordination and Measures within Parks and Preserves should include the dimensions of the safety buffer for the Helicopter Landing Zone. | C1-8 |
| 9. | A mitigation measure should be added to require that an SDG&E representative coordinate with Parks and Recreation staff during construction activities at both Simon and Mount Gower Preserves. | C1-9 |
| 10. | The project includes pole replacements within County managed preserve lands. Specifically, between poles P24 – P39 at the Simon Preserve and between poles P63 – 65 at Mount Gower Preserve as shown on Attachment A - Detailed Alignment Maps. A Helicopter Landing Zone is also proposed at Mount Gower. As the Mount Gower Preserve is closed to the public in August, work in this area should be scheduled at this time, if possible, to avoid impacts to the public use of the Preserve. | C1-10 |
| 11. | APM-REC-1. This measure proposes temporary trail detours. It is not clear if these detours exist or would have to be constructed. If it is the latter, then the appropriate impacts and restoration requirements would need to be disclosed. | C1-11 |
| 12. | Section 4.6 (Construction Activities, Temporary Construction Work Areas) should address whether or not Mount Gower Preserve will be able to stay open to the public while the Helicopter Landing Zone is in use. A discussion of the frequency and duration of use of the Helicopter Landing Zone at the Preserve should be added. In addition, if materials will be stockpiled at the Helicopter Landing Zone, the type of material and how they will be secured on-site should be described. | C1-12 |
| 13. | Section 4.6 (Construction Activities) should address whether the Simon Preserve will have to be closed during any phase of on-site construction. | C1-13 |
| 14. | Section 4.6 (Construction Activities), Temporary Construction Work Areas, should address whether the on-site stringing area will be used for storage of materials, and if so, how the materials would be secured on-site. | C1-14 |
| 15. | Section 4.6 (Construction Activities) should address whether rock blasting could occur in either Simon or Mount Gower Preserves. | C1-15 |
| 16. | Section 5.15.3 Environmental Impacts, Impact Discussion (a), should discuss how temporary trail detour signs will be placed on both Simon and Mt. Gower Preserves to deter trail use. | C1-16 |

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NOISE

- 17. APM-NOI-3 and MM-NOI-1. The notification distance of residents for construction is only 50 feet. This does not appear adequate especially in relation to residents surrounding County-managed Preserves and other populated areas. It is recommended that all residents within 250 feet of construction activities be notified.
- 18. The MND lacks any technical analysis of noise impacts. The County of San Diego Noise Ordinance regulates noise levels at the property line. A technical study should be completed to determine whether construction operations, including helicopter noise and blasting, will exceed the noise levels measured at the property line on surrounding unincorporated lands.
- 19. The MND identifies various mitigation measures to address noise impacts; however, without the benefit of a technical analysis of noise levels it is impossible to determine if the measures would fully mitigate noise impacts.
- 20. MND mitigation measure MM NOI-2 recognizes that noise levels could exceed 75 dBA and measures would be needed to reduce noise levels. The measure indicates that SDG&E may erect portable noise barriers or offer to relocate affected residents. As there is no technical analysis to document the anticipated noise levels, it is unknown whether these measures would fully mitigate impacts.
- 21. MM NOI-3 states, "In the unlikely event that rock blasting is used during construction, a noise and vibration calculation will be prepared and submitted to the California Public Utilities Commission and the County of San Diego for review before blasting at each site. The construction contractor will ensure compliance with all relevant local, state, and federal regulations relating to blasting activities." This constitutes deferral of impact analysis and mitigation. The environmental document should include some analysis of rock blasting operations, provide anticipated noise levels, duration of blasting, and identify feasible measures that would be taken to minimize adverse impacts.

C1-17

C1-18

C1-19

C1-20

C1-21

TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC

- 22. The County requests that SDG&E confirm and state in the document that there will be no permanent interference, blockage, or any other disruption to County roads, right-of-ways, trails, and/or pathways. Where project activities may impact any of these County facilities, SDG&E should consult and work closely with County staff to avoid adverse impacts.

C1-22

Mr. Payne
November 7, 2013

Page 5

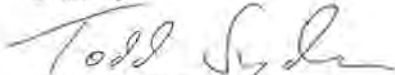
23. Table 5.16-1 (Key Roadways Adjacent to the Project Alignment) should include Creelman Lane. Figures 1 and 2 of Attachment A (Detailed Alignment Maps) clearly show replacement steel pole installations along Creelman Lane.
24. Creelman Lane is a public roadway with a right-of-way width of 60 feet along the project alignment. The existing wood poles on Creelman Lane are within the public right-of-way and appear to be within the clear recovery zone (AASHTO Green Book, Chapter IV: "...the unobstructed, relatively flat area provided beyond the edge of the traveled way for the recovery of errant vehicles). With removal of the existing wood poles, the new steel poles should be relocated (or undergrounded) outside of the clear recovery zone or as far away from the edge of pavement as possible. This recommendation applies to any proposed pole relocation within or adjacent to County public road rights-of-way.

C1-23

C1-24

The County appreciates the opportunity to continue to participate in the environmental review process for this project. We look forward to receiving future environmental documents related to this project or providing additional assistance at your request. If you have any questions regarding these comments, please contact Jennifer Domeier, Land Use Environmental Planner, at (858) 495-5204, or via email at jennifer.domeier@sdcounty.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



TODD SNYDER, Chief
Advance Planning Division

e-mail cc:

Adam Wilson, Policy Advisor, Board of Supervisors, District 2
Megan Jones, Group Program Manager, LUEG
Dahvia Lynch, Chief, Department of Parks and Recreation
Megan Hamilton, Group Program Manager, Department of Parks and Recreation
Richard Chin, Associate Transportation Specialist, Department of Public Works
Nick Ortiz, Land Development Project Manager, Planning & Development Services
Julia Quinn, Environmental Planning Manager, Department of Public Works
Ramona Community Planning Group
Jennifer Domeier, Land Use Environmental Planner, Planning & Development Services

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Response to Comment Letter C1

County of San Diego, Planning & Development Services

Todd Snyder

November 7, 2013

C1-1 This comment regarding the County of San Diego Guidelines for Determining Significance is noted. The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), as lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), applied the significance criteria detailed in Appendix G, Environmental Checklist, of the CEQA statutes and Guidelines. The County of San Diego significance thresholds for air quality and noise are used in the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) (see Table 5.4-7, County of San Diego Significance Thresholds, and Table 5.12-1, San Diego County Noise Ordinance Sound Level Limits).

C1-2 Section 4.0, Project Description, of the IS/MND includes a description of project phasing as described in Section 4.6, Construction Activities. Table 4-4, Proposed Construction Schedule, provides construction phases, duration of each phase, and the anticipated start date of each phase of construction.

C1-3 As discussed in the Mitigated Negative Declaration Section (page MND-3) and in Section 4.8 of the Draft IS/MND, San Diego Gas and Electric (SDG&E) has identified project design features (PDFs) that have been incorporated in this IS/MND as Applicant Proposed Measures (APMs) that would be implemented to avoid or reduce potential impacts from the proposed project. During the preparation of the IS/MND, these measures were assumed part of the proposed project and are not considered as CPUC-recommended mitigation measures. However, SDG&E's APMs will be monitored by the CPUC as they will be compiled with the mitigation measures into the Mitigation Monitoring Compliance and Reporting Program (MMCRP), which will be completed upon adoption of the Final IS/MND.

A Mitigation Monitoring Program (MMP) table for the proposed project is provided in Section 6 of the IS/MND that lists each APM and mitigation measure and outlines procedures for successful implementation. Section 6 of the IS/MND indicates the CPUC will use the MMP as the framework for the MMCRP, which will guide the effective implementation of the MMCRP by the CPUC. As required by CEQA Section 21081.6 of the California Public Resources Code, the CPUC has prepared and will adopt a monitoring program (MND Section 6) as a condition of approval of SDG&E's proposed TL 637 Wood-to-Steel Replacement Project.

C1-4 Per this comment, references to the North County MSCP and the East County MSCP in Section 5.5, Biological Resources of the IS/MND have been revised to state "Draft North County Plan" and "Draft East County Plan." These edits do not alter the analysis or significance conclusions of the IS/MND, and impacts would remain less than significant.

- C1-5** Text edits per this comment have been incorporated into Section 5.5.1.5 of the IS/MND. These edits do not alter the analysis or significance conclusions of the IS/MND, and impacts would remain less than significant.
- C1-6** This comment is noted, and the text has been revised to reflect that the North County MSCP is still under development. This edit does not alter the analysis or significance conclusions of the IS/MND, and impacts would remain less than significant.
- C1-7** Figure 4-3 of the IS/MND depicts the four staging yards and two helicopter landing zones proposed as part of the project. The closest staging yards to Simon Preserve are the proposed Warnock and Creelman staging yards, which are both located over 1 mile to the west of Simon Preserve.

As stated in Section 4.6 of the IS/MND, all temporary construction areas would be restored to preconstruction conditions. Restoration efforts would include vegetation planting and propagation, reseeding, and replanting as appropriate for each of the sites. All reseeding and replanting will be in accordance with SDG&E's Natural Community Conservation Plan; specifically Section 7.1.4.30 implements native hydroseeding to occur on slopes to improve success of erosion control. In addition, Section 7.2.1 discusses Habitat Enhancement Measures, which will be implemented as appropriate for each area. When implementing a hydroseeding approach, native seed mix is typically obtained from a commercial seed provider. As further stated, seed mix specifications and application techniques shall be provided by the Habitat Restoration Specialist, an acknowledged specialist in native habitat restoration, or a plant ecologist with experience developing native restoration plans in Southern California. The Habitat Restoration Specialist may also implement the following vegetation restoration techniques: hand seeding, imprinting, and soil and plant salvage. Indeed, soil and plant salvage is well suited for staging areas. In this technique, "[n]ative vegetation from the area to be impacted should be removed, mulched, and stockpiled separately. Top soil should also be removed and stockpiled separately. Following construction activities, the top soil should be replaced and covered with the mulch. The top soil and mulch both have native propagules and the mulch reduces the erosion potential." (SDG&E 1995, p. 113)

Further, APM-AES-2 states that SDG&E will restore all temporarily disturbed terrain as appropriate and that revegetation would be used to reestablish a natural-appearing landscape and reduce potential visual contrast between disturbed areas and the surrounding landscape. Please also refer to response C1-3, regarding APMs.

- C1-8** This comment is noted. APM-HAZ-4 states that SDG&E will coordinate with the authorized officer for the recreation area to identify appropriate safety measures where construction areas (including helicopter landing zones) are near parks and preserves. Additionally, mitigation measures MM HAZ-4 and MM HAZ-5 provide additional safety measures to ensure that helicopter operations during construction would not result in a safety hazard.

- C1-9** APM-HAZ-4 states that the construction schedule and activities will be coordinated with the authorized officer for the recreation area, which includes both the Simon Preserve and the Mount Gower Preserve; therefore, no modifications were made to the IS/MND.
- C1-10** APM-HAZ-4 states that the construction schedule and activities will be coordinated with the authorized officer for the recreation area, which includes both the Simon Preserve and the Mount Gower Preserve. The recommendation to conduct construction within the Mount Grover Preserve in August, if possible, when the preserve is closed is noted and will be included in the project record for the CPUC to consider during project deliberation.
- C1-11** Trail detours would not include newly constructed trails for detour paths. Detours would be provided on existing trail systems within the preserve should specific trails require temporary closure during construction or maintenance activities.
- C1-12** Please refer to response C1-8, regarding safety measures for helicopter operations and that close coordination with the authorized officer for the recreation area would occur. The Mount Gower Preserve would remain open while the helicopter landing zone (HLZ, sited in the Mount Gower parking lot) is in use; however, temporary trail use restrictions would be placed on areas around the Mount Gower HLZ while the HLZ is in use. Helicopter use at this location would be needed for the removal of one pole, and removal of the single pole would be conducted mid-week to minimize disruption to recreationalists (SDG&E 2013). Additionally, as described in APM-HAZ-4, recreation detours and a safety buffer would be established during construction activities within the preserves. Moreover, as described in Section 5.12, Noise, helicopter use would be required where pull tensioning vehicles cannot reach pole sites, and flight operations would be limited to approximately 2 hours. As stated in Section 4.6 of the Draft IS/MND, the HLZs will be utilized for helicopter take-offs and landings and the staging areas will be used for refueling areas for vehicles and construction equipment by a mobile fueling truck, pole assemblage, open storage of material and equipment, construction trailers, portable restrooms, parking, and lighting and may include generator use for temporary power in construction trailers. The staging yards may also be used as helicopter landing zones (SDG&E 2013).
- C1-13** Neither the Simon Preserve nor the Mount Gower Preserve would be required to close during temporary construction activities. Construction activities would be relatively mobile along the alignment, and would not occur in any one place for an extended period of time. Therefore, closing either of the preserves would not be required during construction activities.
- C1-14** No materials would be located at the stringing sites, as the proposed project would include designated staging and storage areas for the storage of materials, as shown on Figure 4-3.
- C1-15** The exact locations of blasting activities, if any, are unknown at this time. It is possible that no blasting would be required during construction activities. Blasting

operations would only be required where hard rock is found during pole extraction. Section 5.8 of the IS/MND Impact a) addresses hazards should blasting be required and provides MM HAZ-3 to ensure that impacts would be less than significant.

C1-16 As discussed in Section 5.15.3 of the IS/MND, SDG&E has proposed APM-REC-1 which would implement temporary trail detours where construction activities may temporarily interfere with recreational trails in both the Simon and Mount Grower preserves. Trail detour signs would be placed in coordination with the authorized officer for the recreation area, which includes both the Simon Preserve and the Mount Gower Preserve in accordance with APM-HAZ-4.

C1-17 A 50-foot notification distance was identified because the average construction equipment noise level adjusted for an 8-hour day was approximately 75 decibels (dB) at a distance of 50 feet. Based on noise levels provided in Table 5.12-4 in Section 5.12, Noise, it is unlikely that residences located beyond the 50-foot reference distance would experience noise levels in excess of 75 dB. Additionally, construction activities would be mobile, moving along the proposed project alignment, and no construction activities would occur or pieces of equipment would be in operation for an extended period of time. All construction activities would be short-term and intermittent. Therefore, a notification distance greater than 50 feet would not be necessary.

C1-18 It is generally known what potential noise impacts could occur during construction activities, and any potentially significant noise impacts associated with the proposed project would occur during construction; no significant noise impacts would occur during operation of the proposed project. Construction activities and associated noise levels would change from day to day, and potentially hourly; therefore, construction noise impacts can only be anticipated with a limited degree of certainty. Table 5.12-4 discloses the anticipated noise levels for various pieces of equipment at various distances. Additional technical data beyond that provided in Section 5.12, Noise, would not provide any more detailed information based on what is known about project construction.

Section 5.12 of the IS/MND appropriately identifies potentially significant noise impacts, and sufficient mitigation measures have been provided to ensure identified impacts are reduced to a less-than-significant level. No specific noise measurements would be required in order to adequately reduce impacts to a less-than-significant level during construction. Additionally, in accordance with the County of San Diego Noise Ordinance, all construction activities would occur during daytime hours between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m.

Moreover, construction activities would be mobile in nature and would move along the alignment as poles are continually replaced; therefore, construction activities would not occur for extended periods of time in any one place along the project alignment resulting in long-term noise sources. Due to the temporary nature of construction activities and associated noise impacts, the mitigation measures

provided would sufficiently mitigate noise impacts to a level that is less than significant. Once construction is completed, construction noise would cease.

- C1-19** Please refer to response C1-18. It is generally known what noise impacts would occur during construction activities, and any potentially significant noise impacts associated with the proposed project would occur during construction; no significant noise impacts would occur during operation of the proposed project. Section 5.12 of the IS/MND appropriately identifies potentially significant noise impacts, and sufficient mitigation measures have been provided to ensure identified impacts are reduced to a less-than-significant level. No specific noise measurements or project-specific technical analysis would be required in order to adequately reduce impacts to a less-than-significant level during construction.

Additionally, construction activities would be mobile in nature and would move along the alignment as poles are continually replaced; therefore, construction activities would not occur for extended periods of time in any one place along the project alignment resulting in long-term noise sources. Due to the temporary nature of construction activities and associated noise impacts, the mitigation measures provided would sufficiently mitigate noise impacts to a level that is less than significant. Once construction is completed, construction noise would cease.

- C1-20** During operation of equipment or other routine construction activities that may disturb residences or livestock, erection of a noise barrier would likely attenuate noise levels such that impacts would be reduced to a less-than-significant level. If during construction activities it is found that erection of a noise barrier or similar mitigation does not sufficiently attenuate noise, residents would be offered a relocation option. Temporary relocation of residences would reduce any noise impacts to a level that is less than significant. Therefore, no specific technical data or noise measurements would be required to further substantiate the findings in the IS/MND regarding construction noise.

- C1-21** Section 5.8, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, of the IS/MND under Impact a) addresses blasting and provides MM HAZ-3 to ensure that impacts would be less than significant. The mitigation measure requires that a pre-blast survey and blasting plan be prepared prior to removing earth or rock with the use of explosives. The pre-blast survey would be conducted for structures within a minimum radius of 1,000 feet from the identified blast site. Sensitive receptors that could reasonably be affected by blasting would also be surveyed as part of the pre-blast survey. The blasting plan would outline the anticipated blasting procedures for the removal of rock material at pole locations and would address air-blast limits, ground vibrations, and maximum peak particle velocity for ground movement to ensure that all application regulatory measures are met. This blasting plan will be required to be submitted to the CPUC and the County of San Diego for review before blasting at each site begins.

Further, MM NOI-3 specifically states that a noise and vibration calculation will be performed as required in MM HAZ-3 at each blasting site to ensure noise impacts do

not exceed established thresholds. A site-specific calculation and measurement prior to any single blasting event would be conducted as required by MM HAZ-3, and therefore there would be no deferral of impact analysis and mitigation.

- C1-22** The Draft IS/MND, Section 5.16, Transportation and Traffic, response (a) has been modified to include language regarding permanent disruptions to County transportation facilities. Because construction activities would be temporary and continually mobile, and no construction effort would take place in any one area for an extended period of time, and operational activities would mirror those of SDG&E currently, no permanent traffic impacts regarding County facilities would occur.
- C1-23** Section 5.16, Transportation and Traffic of the IS/MND under the existing roadway network has been modified to include Creelman Lane. Creelman Lane was also added to Table 5.16-1, Key Roadways Adjacent to the Project Alignment. These edits do not alter the analysis or significance conclusions of the IS/MND, and impacts would remain less than significant.
- C1-24** This comment is noted. The existing poles on the west side of the street would be completely removed and poles would no longer be located west of the roadway. The proposed pole locations on the east side of the roadway would be replaced in similar locations as the existing poles; therefore, no changes would be made from existing conditions in terms of pole location and placement. The recommendation to relocate proposed poles outside of the “clear recovery zone” is noted and will be included in the project record for the CPUC to consider during project deliberation.

Comment Letter D1



The Protect Our Communities Foundation
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Send correspondence to kelly@kellyfuller.net

November 7, 2014

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California Public Utilities Commission
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Encinitas, California 92024
Sent via Electronic Mail: TL637woodtosteel@dudek.com, Lon.Payne@cpuc.ca.gov

Subject: A. 13-03-003: SDG&E TL637 Comments

Dear Mr. Payne:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on SDG&E's TL-637 wood to steel project (Project). These comments are provided on behalf of The Protect Our Communities Foundation (POC).

Unfortunately, comments for this proceeding are due on the same day as scoping comments for SDG&E's much larger Master Special Use Permit project. That scheduling has not allowed allow POC to give both projects the thorough review we would normally conduct. Instead, we have had to do less than we ordinarily would on both projects in order to submit comments on both by the deadline. We urge the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to establish separate comment due dates in the future, so that the public can participate more fully.

There is a fatal flaw in analyzing this project separately from SDG&E's Master Special Use Project. It shares 12 poles with a power line in SDG&E's Master Special Use Project, TL 626. According to the attached document, it was going to be included in the Master Special Use Project, by order of the CPUC, but it was separated after SDG&E objected.

Analyzing the two projects separately is clearly incorrect under both NEPA and CEQA. The two lines share 12 poles, therefore they are a Connected Action under NEPA. Both projects involve removing wooden poles and replacing them with steel poles and reconductoring with heavier conductor, all described as fire hardening, both projects involving the same 12 poles. It would be piecemealing under CEQA to analyze them separately. This may be obscured by the currently emphasis in the Master Special Use Project on the Forest Service permits, but that project involves decisions by four other agencies besides the Forest Service, and nearly half the poles are outside the Cleveland National Forest, so it is hardly just a Forest Service project and the current description of the Master Special Use Permit project SDG&E is using is too narrow.

We are also concerned about this project's reliance on the Golden Eagle surveys that were done for SDG&E's Sunrise Powerlink project. They were conducted under the supervision of David Bittner, a biologist whose work has since come under scrutiny following his conviction for violations of the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act. The government's sentencing memo raises concerns about his methods (e.g. use of telemetry) and

D1-1

D1-2

D1-3

unwillingness to share data with agencies.¹ POC tried to obtain the Sunrise Powerlink Golden Eagle surveys in order to assess their quality, but SDG&E refused to provide them, despite our willingness to work with SDG&E and receive redacted data in order to safeguard eagles.² How can the public be expected to comment intelligently on the significance of impacts to eagles if they cannot see for themselves the quality of the information that was used to draw the conclusions in the documentation? In addition, the IS-MND mentions an eagle nest five miles from the site that was inactive in 2012. However, eagle nests can be inactive and then become active.³ If this nest being inactive in 2012 is the basis for the statement that the species is not considered to have a potential to nest directly within the ROW, it needs to be reconsidered. (See the sentence beginning "Therefore.") (IS-MND 5.5-17).

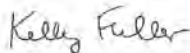
D1-3
Cont.

Furthermore, MM BIO-4 is too weak. If the intent is to spare the lives of nesting birds that are protected under federal law, construction should not be taking place during nesting season, period. Instead, this measure proposes a complicated scheme of biological monitoring for active nests and nesting birds with a very small 100 foot nest buffer, which, with CPUC approval, can be increased.⁴ Although the monitoring biologist is authorized by this mitigation measure to halt construction activities if he or she "determines that the construction activities are disturbing the nesting activities," there is still no guarantee that will happen. Much depends on whether the monitors feel they will be able to keep their jobs if they stop construction, and that will depend on the internal policies of each subcontractor. Furthermore, during Sunrise Powerlink construction, SDG&E management publicly displayed unhappiness with stopping construction for the nesting of migratory birds, instead of being satisfied that the company had received a waiver from not being able to construct during nesting season. The monitor and stop construction plan proposed in MM BIO-4 appears to set the stage for the same SDG&E complaint.⁵

D1-4

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,



Kelly Fuller
Consultant to the Protect Our Communities Foundation
kelly@kellyfuller.net

¹ The sentencing memo is available at <http://www.kcet.org/news/rewire/Bittner.sent.mem.filed6-27-13.pdf>. The federal government may also have other information that was not made public in the memo.

² Personal communications (emails) between Kelly Fuller (POC) and Rebecca Giles (SDG&E), 10/31/13 and 11/5/13. Lon Payne of the CPUC was copied on all emails.

³ See U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (2008), *Final Environmental Assessment, Proposal to Permit Take as Provided Under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act*, page 21. Available at http://www.fws.gov/alaska/eaglepermit/pdf/environmental_assessment.pdf.

⁴ In contrast, the County of Ventura recommends no construction during nesting season and a 300 foot buffer from nests if construction occurs. See Protection of Nesting Birds During Construction, available at http://www.ventura.org/ima/planning/pdf/bio/Protection_of_Nesting_Birds.pdf.

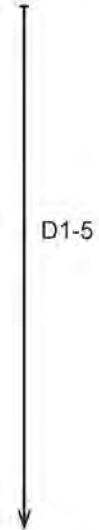
⁵ See Wolff, Eric (3/31/12). "Sunrise Powerlink Builders Yield to Birds and Toads." Available at <http://www.ubandiego.com/news/2012/mar/31/energy-sunrise-powerlink-builders-yield-to-birds/all/?print>.



SDG&E's Fire Hardening Project in Cleveland National Forest

A.12-10-009

May 30, 2013





The CNF PTC is a Public Safety Project in San Diego's Highest Fire Risk Area

SDG&E requests CPUC authority to replace five wood pole power lines in the Cleveland National Forest (CNF) with steel for fire hardening.

- All five lines are existing, 69kV wood pole lines. SDG&E proposes to rebuild the lines in place.
- No new lines or increases in capacity are proposed.
- DRA was the only party to protest due to cost.

The lines are located in the County's highest fire risk area.

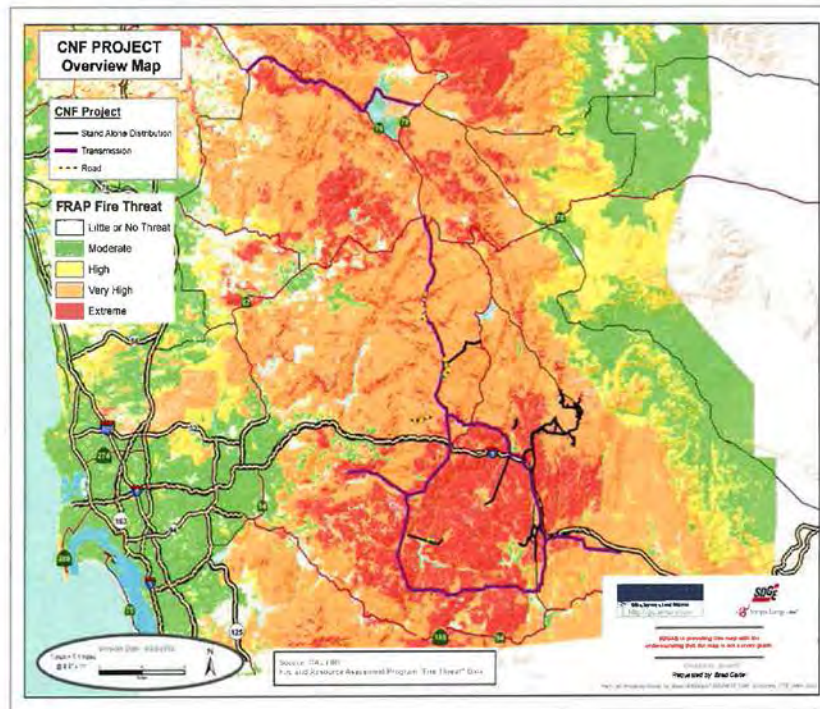
- In 2003 and 2007, multiple wildfires in San Diego burned almost two thirds of the county.
- These replacement projects will occur in the portion of the county that hasn't burned in over 40 years (1970 "Laguna Fire").
- Wind speeds in this area are now known to reach over 66 mph.
- SDG&E has already completed replacement of over 1,800 wood poles with steel poles on power lines outside of the forest.
- From a fire hardening and safety perspective, these lines are highest priority because they are in the highest fire risk area.

SDG&E has been working with the US Forest Service for many years.

- In 2005, SDG&E filed an application for a Master Special Use Permit (MSUP) for existing facilities located within the Cleveland National Forest. The MSUP application has been expanded over time to include wood-to-steel conversion of existing 69- and 12-kV distribution lines.

D1-5
Cont.

CNF Project Overlaid on CALFIRE Fire Threat Map



D1-5
Cont.



SDG&E Has Worked Diligently and In Good Faith to Accommodate Energy Division's Procedural Requests

In 2011, to expedite fire hardening, SDG&E requested simultaneous review by CPUC. Since that time, the USFS environmental review process is on hold until CPUC accepts SDG&E's application.

- **January 2011:** Energy Division declines to participate as a Cooperating Agency in USFS' on-going review. Energy Division instead decides to be a Co-Lead Agency and to prepare a Joint EIR/EIS with USFS. SDG&E begins drafting Proponent's Environmental Assessment (PEA) in support of a formal CPUC application. (USFS environmental scoping is placed on hold; currently remains suspended.)
- **April 2012:** Energy Division rejects SDG&E's PEA format and directs SDG&E to include six 12kV lines in the Permit to Construct application, even though no Permit to Construct is required for the 12kV lines. (Resolution takes 5 months and includes submittal of "PEA Equivalent".)
- **August 2012:** Energy Division directs SDG&E to include TL 637 in the application, even though TL 637 is a separate project. (Resolution takes 3 months.)
- **October 2012:** SDG&E files Permit to Construct with PEA Equivalent, per agreement.
- **October 2012-March 2013:** Multiple discussions and meetings to address agency comments and deem application complete. By February 27, 2013, Energy Division determines "the Application contains sufficient information to satisfy the requirements of the CPUC's Information and Criteria List and can be deemed complete conditioned upon receipt of the revised Plan of Development [PEA Equivalent]" including potential alternatives for re-routing segments of two lines requested by USFS. SDG&E submits revised Plan of Development on March 22, 2013.
- **April 2013:** Energy Division directs SDG&E to re-file and re-notice the application, and begin a second 30-day protest period. (CPUC application process and public scoping delayed six weeks and counting.)

D1-5
Cont.



Energy Division Directed SDG&E to Re-File and Re-Notice an Application that is Effectively Complete

On April 9, after SDG&E prepared and submitted a “Revised POD” per Energy Division’s request, Energy Division stated in email:

“Finally, I wanted to let you know that, because so much has changed in this POD, the ALJ in this proceeding has determined that SDG&E will need to file an amended application and revised POD with the docket office, followed by a 30 day comment period. We will require some but not all of the notice requirements of GO 131-D.” (Emphasis added.)

Energy Division’s unexpected April 9 email is problematic in many ways:

- The Revised POD was prepared at Energy Division’s request. Energy Division was fully aware of the exact nature of the changes to the POD for months. There was no request or discussion about filing an application amendment.
- Energy Division provided no explanation of what changes are problematic or why they trigger an amended application.
- Energy Division provided no guidance on the mechanics of these arbitrary procedural requirements.

On May 22, after attempting to gain clarification from Energy and Legal Divisions, SDG&E contacted the ALJ to understand how the process would be undertaken. ALJ had been briefed by Energy Division, indicated her skepticism of the utility’s hesitation, and stated that no formal ruling will be issued. That same day, Energy Division sent an email stating that Energy Division will not deem the application complete until SDG&E satisfies several new procedural requirements and another 30-day protest period expires.

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D1-5
Cont.

Re-Filing Would Be Unprecedented, Unnecessary, Arbitrary and Time-Consuming



Per the May 22 email, Energy Division will not deem the application complete until:

- SDG&E files the Revised POD and other supporting documentation in the CPUC Docket;
- SDG&E provides expanded notice (direct mail, notice list and newspaper advertisement) of a potential alternative location for TL626, as well as information regarding C157 (a 12kV distribution line project); and
- A new 30-day protest period expires.

Re-filing and re-noticing is unprecedented, unnecessary, arbitrary and time-consuming

- Since the “Proposed Project” did not change, an amended application is not required under the law or GO 131. Energy Division already received and reviewed the Revised POD, which is not required even under USFS rules.
- The potential alternatives were offered by USFS, not SDG&E. Re-filing implies sponsorship of a costly alternative, which SDG&E does not support (nor will it oppose).
- Re-filing will trigger an additional 30-day comment period; re-noticing of the project to residents previously noticed, resulting in confusion; and new noticing to customers near the proposed re-routed segments that SDG&E does not support, inviting new protests to the application.
- It is not clear who should be noticed or under what authority, adding unnecessary risk and setting an unfounded precedent.
- The alternative segments will be considered in the environmental review process, as is done for every other licensing project. Other alternatives may also be offered, analyzed and commented upon. Re-filing is not necessary to accomplish this.

D1-5
Cont.



There is No Good Reason to Delay These Critical Public Safety Improvements Any Longer

SDG&E has complied with every data request, deficiency notice and other request that Energy Division has made, including:

- Information not required by the CPUC's Information and Criteria List;
- Information not related to the CPUC PTC application but instead related to the USFS MSUP application; and
- Information not required in order for Energy Division to determine whether or not to prepare an Environmental Impact Report per CEQA.

SDG&E's application is complete as a matter of law.

- Energy Division determined on February 27 that "the Application contains sufficient information to satisfy the requirements of the CPUC's Information and Criteria List and can be deemed complete conditioned upon receipt of the revised Plan of Development."
- Energy Division received a revised Plan of Development on March 22, then again on April 19. Energy Division has not identified any substantive deficiencies and the 30-day period to do so has lapsed.

➤ ENERGY DIVISION SHOULD ISSUE THE CEQA SCOPING NOTICE WITHOUT FURTHER DELAY.

- The CEQA scoping notice can be mailed and published to reach a broad distribution of land owners, agencies, and other interested parties.
- The CEQA scoping notice normally triggers a 30-day comment period, during which anyone, not just parties to the proceeding, can comment.
- A primary purpose of CEQA scoping is to solicit input on potential project alternatives. Therefore, the scoping notice is the proper vehicle for CPUC and USFS to present additional information about potential alternatives to SDG&E's Proposed Project.

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D1-5
Cont.

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Response to Comment Letter D1

The Protect Our Communities Foundation

Kelly Fuller

November 7, 2013

D1-1 This information is noted and will be included in the project record for the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to consider during project deliberation. All required postings, notices, and public comment periods have been adhered to pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the TL 637 Wood-to-Steel Replacement Project. The comment has no bearing on the TL 637 project's compliance with CEQA and does not raise any substantive comments related to physical environmental impacts. No additional response is necessary.

D1-2 The purpose of the TL 637 Wood-to-Steel Project is to fire-harden the project area (reduce fire risk), which is located between the communities of Ramona and Santa Ysabel, in north central San Diego County. The fire hardening or wood-to-steel project is being proposed in order to protect the electric system against wildfire damage, while also reducing the risk of power line-related ignitions. This part of San Diego is within a high fire risk area of San Diego County (see the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) Figure 5.8-1). As proposed, the fire hardening of TL 637 includes the use of steel poles in place of wood poles, increases phase spacing, incorporates the Avian Power Line Interaction Committee guidelines, uses high strength multi-stranded steel core conductors, and is designed based on extreme wind loading criteria.

The comment states that there is a fatal flaw in the analysis since the TL 637 project has not been analyzed as part of San Diego Gas & Electric's proposed Master Special Use Permit/Permit to Construct (MSUP/PTC) Power Line Replacement Projects). The proposed TL 637 Wood to Steel Pole Replacement Project is being considered by the CPUC as an independent action that has independent utility status from the power line replacement projects being proposed under the MSUP/ PTC Power Line Replacement Projects (A.12-10-009). TL 637 is an existing 69-kilovolt (kV), predominantly single-circuit transmission line that connects the existing Santa Ysabel and Creelman substations providing electric power to surrounding customers. TL 626 is also a separate existing 69 kV predominantly single-circuit transmission line that connects the existing Santa Ysabel, Boulder Creek, and Descanso substations providing electric power to customers in a separate geographic area from TL 637. On the eastern end of TL 637 and the northern end of TL 626, these power lines would share 12 common poles within the existing right-of-way. Therefore, in order to avoid having two parallel but separate power line alignments, the 12 poles are double circuited (TL 637 on one side and TL 626 on the other side) into the Santa Ysabel Substation.

The replacement of the 12 poles will not affect the evaluation of SDG&E's proposed MSUP/PTC Power Line Replacement Projects in any way—it will not become more likely to happen because the current power lines proposed to be replaced under the

MSUP/PTC Power Line Replacement Projects could stay on the new or existing poles indefinitely. As such, the proposed TL 637 project and the five 69 kV power lines proposed for pole replacement in the MSUP/PTC Power Line Replacement Projects are all considered discrete and independent of each other and provide electric power to existing customers in different geographic areas. Further, the completion of the TL 637 project would not require any electrical upgrades to any equipment from the MSUP/PTC Power Line Replacement Projects. Each of the individual 69 kV power lines are independent and do not rely on one another to deliver electricity to customers; therefore, the proposed TL 637 Wood to Steel Pole Replacement Project addressed in the IS/MND does not depend on any other action for its justification.

Moreover, one of the primary purposes of these wood-to-steel pole replacement projects is to increase fire safety and service reliability in high fire risk areas of San Diego County. Evaluation of the TL 637 Wood to Steel Pole Replacement Project and the MSUP/PTC Power Line Replacement Projects separately will lead to increased fire protection sooner in the TL 637 project area, thereby providing a public purpose of increased fire safety in this region of San Diego County.

The comment also states that the TL 637 project is deficient under CEQA since it is “piecemealing” the project by not including the MSUP/PTC Power Line Replacement Projects as part of the whole of the action. The commenter fails to explain or clearly state any particular impacts from the MSUP/PTC Power Line Replacement Projects that could not be adequately considered as cumulative impacts in the TL 637 IS/MND. In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Appendix G, Environmental Checklist form, Section XVIII (b), the TL 637 project includes the MSUP/PTC Power Line Replacement Projects as a cumulative project (see IS/MND Section 5.18). Therefore, the IS/MND does evaluate the potential cumulative environmental impacts from the proposed TL 637 Wood to Steel Pole Replacement Project and the MSUP/PTC Power Line Replacement Projects, and is not segmenting the project to avoid the consideration of possible impacts. The IS/MND Section 5.18, Mandatory Findings of Significance, Table 5.18-1, provides a list of foreseeable cumulative projects and a discussion of the potential effects of these future projects, providing adequate, complete, and good faith efforts at full disclosure of information about the effect which the TL 637 project is likely to have on the environment. Table 5.18-1 includes the MSUP/PTC Power Line Replacement Projects and indicates that the TL 637 project and the TL 626 project both propose to replace approximately 12 poles and conductor where TL 637 and 626 are co-located on double-circuit structures. As described, these 12 structures will be replaced as part of whichever project proceeds first. Moreover, as discussed in Section 5.18 of the IS/MND, the TL 637 project’s incremental effects on air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, hydrology and water quality, noise, and transportation and traffic, when combined with other cumulative projects in the project area, determined all physical environmental impacts under CEQA to be less than significant.

As stated by the court of appeal, CEQA cannot separate a large project into smaller bite-size pieces in order to avoid appropriate environmental review (See *Orinda*

Ass'n v. Board of Supervisors (1986) 182 Cal.App.3d 1145, 1171). However, this refers to public agencies and applicants artificially narrowing the project description in order to reduce and/or eliminate the potential environmental impacts. As discussed above, since the TL 637 project has independent utility status from the proposed power line replacement projects being proposed under the MSUP/PTC Power Line Replacement Projects it does not need to be included as part of the project description (See Kostka & Zischke, Practice Under the Cal. Environmental Quality Act (Cont.Ed.Bar 2012) Sec. 12.8, p. 582 [discussing *Communities for a Better Env't v. City of Richmond* (2010) 184 CA4th 70].)

The comment further states this is a “connected action” under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and should be addressed as one action. As described above, the TL 637 Wood to Steel Pole Replacement project is separate and independent of the power line replacement projects proposed in the MSUP/PTC Power Line Replacement Projects. An evaluation of a connected action pursuant to 40 CFR 1508.25 relates only to NEPA actions and is not part of CEQA. Regardless, even if a connected action argument were relevant to the TL 637 project, the actions are not closely related and do not automatically trigger other actions that require environmental review; the TL 637 project does not depend on prior or simultaneous approval of the PTC Power Line Replacement Projects; and the TL 637 project is not an interdependent part of the PTC Power Line Replacement Projects nor does it depend on that action for its justification. (See 40 CFR 1508.25(a)(1).)

D1-3 Viability of David Bittner’s Data: While Mr. Bittner was found guilty on several counts (e.g., not having valid golden eagle survey permits, illegal collecting of dead specimens, not providing data to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Bird Banding Lab), neither the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) nor California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) commented on the veracity of his data or the conclusions drawn. Further, the U.S. Attorney sentencing brief discusses the value of his data (*U.S.A. v. Bittner* 2013) to the wildlife agencies.

Request to SDG&E for survey data: This comment is noted. It should be noted that neither of the wildlife agencies who are responsible for the eagle (USFWS who protects it under the Bald and Golden Eagle Act and the CDFW who protects it as a Fully Protected species) provided comments regarding the treatment of the eagle in the Draft IS/MND. As these agencies have their own internal data sets for eagles and understand the issues surrounding Mr. Bittner and the efficacy of his data collection, it is considered they agree with the IS/MND analysis and conclusions for this project.

Inactive nest. It is correct that an inactive nest was located within 5 miles from the site and that eagles often cycle through their historical nest sites over time. This data was one consideration when determining the potential for eagles to nest within the right-of-way (ROW). The power line ROW is generally 30 feet wide. It should be noted that the actual impact area is not within the entire ROW but is centered on each pole location. Within the overall ROW, data and resources available were reviewed, and it was determined that there are no suitable nesting resources present. As described in the IS/MND Section 5.5.1.3, according to the Raptor Management page on the U.S. Department of Agriculture

(USDA), U.S. Forest Service (USFS) website (<http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/cleveland/home/?cid=stelprdb5288499>), this nesting location occurs in the Gower Mountains within Cleveland National Forest. On this website, the USDA states the nests were unsuccessful between 2010 and 2012, and no activity occurred in 2013. To further protect nesting and roosting golden eagles, the USDA has provided a closure map for Gower (http://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprdb5288524.pdf) which overlays Mount Gower, the center of which is approximately 1.4 miles away from the ROW. The USDA states that closures at Gower Mountain will be in effect as of December 15, 2013. Closures for 2014 are not projected on this website. A nest that is approximately 1.4 miles away may potentially be affected by the project; however, and Applicant Proposed Measure (APM) and several mitigation measures (MM) are in place that would protect the species, including AMP-BIO-1, MM BIO-2, MM BIO-4, and MM BIO-5.

- D1-4** This comment is noted. MM BIO-4 is multifaceted and provides a number of levels of coverage/protection. First, the primary and preferred method is to construct outside of the breeding bird season. If this is not feasible, then a nesting bird survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist between March 1 and September 1 to determine the presence of nests or nesting birds within 100 feet of the construction activities. The nesting bird surveys shall be completed no more than 72 hours prior to any construction activities. The survey will focus on special-status species known to use the area as well as other nesting birds that are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. If an active nest (defined below) is identified, grading or site disturbance within a 100-foot buffer of the nest shall be monitored on a daily basis by a qualified biologist until project activities are no longer occurring within 100 feet of the nest or until fledglings become independent of the nest. As stated above, several mitigation measures are in place that would protect the species, including AMP BIO-1, MM BIO-2, MM BIO-4, and MM BIO-5. The third protection is that the approved biologist would be allowed to increase the buffer distance as necessary to protect resources. A monitoring biologist may only decrease the buffer radius upon receiving approval from the CPUC, thereby providing an additional layer of oversight to nest protection. The process by which project biologists are vetted and approved by the responsible agencies considers the character of the biologist. Further, the CPUC will provide a third-party biologist to monitor the project biologists during construction. Finally, the project will actually decrease the amount of potential impacts to avian species by reducing the number of pole locations and reducing the number and amount of cables and wire which might impact species. The project pulls poles out of sensitive resource areas and work will be relatively brief at any given location, with relatively small direct impacts at any location.
- D1-5** The attachment provided is noted. Please refer to response D1-2 regarding the MSUP/PTC Power Line Replacement Projects.

Comment Letter D2

Rica Nitka

From: Buxton, Cindy <cindy.buxton@np.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 07, 2013 5:00 PM
To: TL637WoodtoSteel
Subject: SDG&E TL637

Dear CPUC and coordinators of this project.

I'm surprised that this project is not part of the concurrent Master Permit project with the USFS. When there is documentation in the history of these two projects that the CPUC ordered this to be part of the Master permit project why is it still separate.

Please study the issue that this is actually a connected action or similar action to that one.

I think you need to assure that the two processes are in sync. If decisions are made to affect one how would you know that it would not impact the other.

How do we know that this has not been predetermined outside of the public view if you are not connecting the two.

I am a commentator of record on the Master Permit project but I was not notified of this one. My comments on that one go back to the original Master Permit proposal in 2009. Why was I not notified?

You need to apply the same process and concern to this as to that one.

Your conductor is going from 1/4 inch wire to one inch wire. Is your voltage staying the same? Since this is similar in infrastructure to the ones in that project I presume it is.

Since voltage X amperage = wattage, if the voltage remains the same the wattage will be no less than four times as great. Additionally the rating on the SDG&E master permit in the forest is at 270 degrees so this is nearly double the temperature.

You need to study the impact when the winds are strong of blowing rye grass into a line that is nearly the temperature of the flash point of rye grass which is common in the area. This would preclude all assumptions that this is for fire hardening as it could readily burn down the backcountry, again.

You need to study the affects of this much amperage on people. Is it not true that with this much current you will have considerably higher magnetic fields. There are several people living near these wires – this newer type where amperage is favored that had had issues with brain cancers and other odd cancers and health issues. I'm aware this is an ongoing concern and inconclusive. However it is generally approached from high voltage not high magnetic fields. You need to disclose and research this part of the concern.

D2-1

D2-2

D2-3

D2-4

D2-5

What is the efficiency of running high current as compared to voltage. What amperage do you need to maintain in order to be efficient considering the cross-sectional area of the wire. What studies have you done on amperage density and how will this impact the efficiency of this wire? What are you doing to coordinate these criteria on this line with the other lines that connect at Santa Ysabel. Are you losing energy due to heat escaping considering the high temperature?

D2-6

I think you are disturbing several acres of land to do stringing. You need to do EAs for this and have them reviewed. You can not just assume there is no impact as by definition you are trampling all over several acres for this process.

D2-7

I am familiar with very similar activities in the Boulder Creek restringing last year. The return visits to check on the revegetation are annoying and excessive to land owners. You do not need to enter their property every week for this purpose. Once a month or even every other month if not even every season should be plenty.

D2-8

Considering how much was burned with this line caught the forest on fire I think it and all powerlines in the back country should be underground. This line cost SDG&E ½ a billion in law suits and could have killed many people but we were very lucky it did not do worse. It DID cause a lot of land to be reburned after the Cedar fire far sooner than environmentally a good thing. Please underground as it is better in the long run. I would like to reference my comments and the comments of Nathan Weflen for the purpose of standing on these issues that we are writing for the SDG&E master Permit in the Cleveland because they apply here as well.

D2-8

D2-10

Sincerely, Cindy Buxton

Chair Forest Committee, San Diego Sierra Club

541 Spruce Street

Imperial Beach, Ca. 91932

Response to Comment Letter D2

San Diego Sierra Club
Cindy Buxton
November 7, 2013

- D2-1** The proposed TL 637 project is being considered by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) as an independent action that has independent utility status from the proposed power line replacement projects being proposed under San Diego Gas & Electric's Master Special Use Permit and Permit to Construct (MSUP/PTC) Power Line Replacement Projects (A.12-10-009). The actions are not closely related and do not automatically trigger other actions that require environmental review; the TL 637 project does not depend on prior or simultaneous approval of the PTC Power Line Replacement Projects; nor does it depend on that action for its justification. (See 40 CFR 1508.25(a)(1).) Since the TL 637 project has independent utility status from the proposed power line replacement projects being proposed under the MSUP/PTC Power Line Replacement Projects it does not need to be included as part of the project description (See Kostka & Zischke, Practice Under the Cal. Environmental Quality Act (Cont.Ed.Bar 2012) Sec. 12.8, p. 582 [discussing *Communities for a Better Env't v. City of Richmond* (2010) 184 CA4th 70]). Please refer to response D1-2 regarding the proposed project (A.13-03-003) and the MSUP/PTC Power Line Replacement Projects (A.12-10-009).
- D2-2** This commentor states they were a commentor on the 2009 MSUP project and should have been notified regarding this project. This information is noted and will be included in the project record for the CPUC to consider during project deliberation. This comment does not raise any substantive comments related to physical environmental impacts. No additional response is necessary.
- D2-3** The voltage of the system is the same. It is assumed the temperature referred in this comment is the temperature of the conductor. It should be noted that the temperature statement is incorrect. The conductor temperature will vary based on numerous variables such as ambient temperature, amount of direct Sun, wind speed etc. Probably the most significant variable is the current (I) or amperage flowing through the conductor and the resistance (R) of the conductor (measured in ohms). The key element that needs to be recognized is as the *size of the conductor increases*, the *resistance of that conductor decreases*. For example, based on industry data for the respective conductors, the R value measured at 70 degrees C for the 3/0 conductor currently installed is approximately 0.1180 ohms/1,000 feet. The R value for the proposed 636 conductor is approximately 0.0312 ohms/1,000 feet. Thus with the same current passing through each of these conductors (and all other variables such as wind and Sun, etc. unchanged) the existing 3/0 conductor would be about 3.8 times hotter than the proposed 636 conductor.
- D2-4** This comment is noted and will be included in the project record for the CPUC to consider during project deliberation. The commentor did not provide substantiation

that the conductors could ignite ryegrass that may happen to blow into a power line. Please refer to response D2-3 that describes that lower heat is associated with the new conductors compared to the existing conductors (based on the same current passing through each of these conductors and all other variables such as wind and Sun, etc. unchanged). Research indicates that without a flame and with just heat, the ignition point for dry annual grass (cheatgrass) is 626 degrees Fahrenheit, and with a flame, the ignition temperature is 518 degrees Fahrenheit (USDA 1974).

D2-5 The proposed project will replace an existing 69-kilovolt (kV) power line, and there will be no increase in the voltage used; therefore, there would be no significant change to electromagnetic fields (EMFs) with implementation of the proposed TL 637 Wood-to-Steel Replacement Project. See Appendix 3-D, Detailed Magnetic Field Management Plan, of San Diego Gas & Electric's Proponent's Environmental Assessment (http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/environment/info/dudek/WoodtoSteel/TL%20637_PEA_Appendices.pdf).

As discussed in the Mitigated Negative Declaration section (page MND-14) of the Draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND), EMFs are not considered in the IS/MND in the context of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for determination of environmental impacts because there is no agreement among scientists that EMFs create a health risk, and there are no defined or adopted CEQA standards for defining health risks from EMFs.

D2-6 This comment does not raise any substantive comments related to physical environmental impacts. No additional response is necessary.

In general, electric utility infrastructure is designed and built to meet prescribed safety and reliability standards. The current flowing on a higher voltage system will be less than on a lower voltage system when serving the same level of energy or load. The lower current flow associated with the higher voltage system will result in less line losses and lower line heating but the higher voltage required will result in larger and higher towers as well as more costly support substation equipment.

Amperage is the flow of energy through a conductor resulting from the energy being transmitted to serve customer load. Thus it varies as the use of the system varies and is not "maintained" at a prescribed or set level but rather changes in real time with the use or load placed on the system.

In response to what is being done to coordinate these criteria on this line with the other lines that connect at Santa Ysabel, facilities in a common area are installed to be compatible and integrate with the overall system grid present in that area. If the predominant system voltage in an area is 69 kV, then new facilities would need to integrate with that voltage level. Any time current flows through wire, energy in the form of heat is created and lost to the surrounding environment. Please also see reply to response D2-3.

- D2-7** Stringing sites are included as part of the project description (see Section 4, Expanded Project Description of the Draft IS/MND). Approximately 22 stringing sites, totaling approximately 5.47 acres, would be established for this project. These temporary work areas were considered in the evaluation of environmental impacts in the Draft IS/MND in Sections 5.2 through 5.18.
- D2-8** This comment is noted. This comment provides reference to a different project area than the proposed project, and does not raise any site-specific physical environmental impacts or issues related to the adequacy of the environmental analysis in the Draft IS/MND. Therefore, no additional response is provided or required.
- D2-9** This information regarding undergrounding the proposed project is noted and will be included in the project record for the CPUC to consider during project deliberation. As discussed on page 14 of the MND, based on the analysis presented in the IS, the project as proposed would be mitigated to less than significant or have no impacts, and therefore the CPUC has determined that further analysis of additional mitigation measures and or alternatives such as undergrounding is not necessary or required.
- D2-10** This comment provides cross-reference to a separate and distinct project (the Master Special Use Permit project), and does not raise any site-specific physical environmental impacts or issues related to the adequacy of the environmental analysis in the Draft IS/MND; therefore, no additional response is provided or required.

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Comment Letter E1



Bradley S. Carter, P.E.
Project Manager, Major Projects

San Diego Gas & Electric Company
8315 Century Park Court, CP21C
San Diego, California 92123

Office: 858-654-1269
Cell: 526-893-6419
bcarter@semprautilities.com

November 7, 2013

Mr. Lon Payne
California Public Utilities Commission
c/o Dudek
605 Third Street
Encinitas, CA 92024

Re: Draft Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration for San Diego Gas & Electric Company Tie-Line 637 Wood-to-Steel Project (Application 13-03-003)

Dear Mr. Payne:

San Diego Gas & Electric Company (SDG&E) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Draft Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the Tie-Line (TL) 637 Wood-to-Steel Project. As you know, the primary objective of the Project is to increase the fire safety and service reliability of TL 637, which traverses a large expanse of densely vegetated and fire-prone areas. Known local conditions for TL 637 include severe weather conditions, such as extreme temperatures and some of the highest winds in San Diego County. For these reasons, SDG&E has been working closely with Energy and Legal Division staff to secure approval of the Project and plans to commence construction in January 2014 so that the Project can be in service before next year's fire season.

SDG&E appreciates the CPUC's extensive review of this replacement project and agrees with the CPUC's determination that the Project will not result in any significant impacts on the environment. This determination is consistent with SDG&E's previous analysis and allows for the Project to be approved and constructed in advance of the 2014 fire season, as requested in SDG&E's Application. Enclosed for your consideration are minor technical comments prepared by the project team for your consideration. Most notably, the project team requests the opportunity to meet with CPUC staff now to develop the Mitigation Monitoring Compliance Reporting Program for the project. SDG&E believes that working together with staff to prepare this document now will avoid unnecessary pre-construction delays.

SDG&E supports CPUC's determination that the project will not result in significant environmental impacts and urges CPUC to adopt the Final MND and approve the Permit to Construct as soon as possible. SDG&E sincerely appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Draft MND and will continue to work with CPUC staff to expedite construction of this project. We look forward to receiving final approval of the Final MND and Permit to Construct for this critical fire hardening project this year.

Sincerely,

Bradley S. Carter, P.E.
Project Manager, Major Projects
San Diego Gas & Electric Company

Enclosures: SDG&E's Comments to Draft Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration

E1-1

SDG&E's Comments to Draft Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration for San Diego Gas & Electric Company Tie-Line 637 Wood-to-Steel Project (Application 13-03-003)

1. Construction of this Critical Fire Hardening Project Should Not Be Unduly Delayed or Burdened by Creating Additional Requirements in the Mitigation Monitoring Compliance Reporting Program

SDG&E notes that Section 6.0 of the MND contains the Mitigation Monitoring Program (MMP) for the Proposed Project. According to the MND, the CPUC "will use this MMP as the framework for a Mitigation Monitoring Compliance Reporting Program (MMCRP)" that "will be created by the CPUC to formalize protocols to be followed prior to and during construction by CPUC third-party environmental monitors (CPUC EMs) and SDG&E project staff." (MND at 6-1).

SDG&E is concerned with the potential delays associated with creating additional protocols and processes to be included in an MMCRP that is yet to be drafted and that could take weeks or months to finalize. In addition, SDG&E is concerned that some of the characterizations found in the columns titled "Implementation Actions", "Monitoring Requirements and Effectiveness Criteria" and "Timing of Action and Location" of the MMP table could be interpreted in an unnecessarily onerous manner.

The Proposed Project is a critical wood-to-steel replacement of existing facilities along the current TL 637 alignment. The Proposed Project does not pose any unique compliance challenges; the potential impacts are predictable and the required mitigation measures/applicant proposed measures comprise standard operating procedures for SDG&E. For these reasons, SDG&E believes that the preparation of the MMCRP can and should be accelerated. Therefore, SDG&E respectfully requests the opportunity to discuss and finalize the MMCRP with CPUC staff. SDG&E seeks to secure a common understanding of how each mitigation measure will be implemented as well as how SDG&E plans to comply with every measure. SDG&E is confident that its concerns can be addressed quickly and efficiently through further discussions with the CPUC. SDG&E does not believe that any changes to the MND are necessary at this time, other than to acknowledge that "the MMCRP may further clarify the Implementation Actions, Monitoring Requirements and Effectiveness Criteria, and Timing of Action and Location".

2. Summary of Proposed Helicopter Usage

SDG&E notes that helicopter usage was described in multiple sections of the draft MND. To summarize for the record the proposed potential helicopter usage for the Proposed Project, SDG&E may potentially utilize helicopters for transportation of materials, removal of existing wood pole structures, installation of new steel poles and be used during stringing or wire pulling activities. Helicopter usage will not take place every day but when utilized, will conform to acceptable hours for construction activities, as outlined within the San Diego County Noise Code.

3. Minor Technical Clarifications and Modifications Requested by SDG&E to Ensure Accuracy

Finally, SDG&E requests that the Final MND be revised to include a few minor technical corrections and clarifications to ensure an accurate administrative record. Enclosed for your consideration is a table (Table 1 – Errata Table) with specific suggested changes. The technical modifications requested by SDG&E primarily include corrections of minor inaccuracies and erroneous statements about the Proposed Project or SDG&E's Subregional Natural Community Conservation Plan and Habitat Conservation Plan (NCCP/HCP). SDG&E does not believe that any of the suggested revisions are significant or controversial. The requested changes do not change the underlying analysis or conclusions in the MND.

E1-2

E1-3

E1-4

Draft Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration for San Diego Gas & Electric Company Tie-Line 637 Wood-to-Steel Project (Application No. 13-03-003)

Table 1 – Errata Table

#	Page # and Location	Section	Suggested Revisions	Comments
1	5.2-12 1 st paragraph	5.2.3 – Impact Discussion	Proposed pole structures along this portion of the alignment would be approximately <u>1 to 18</u> feet taller than existing structures.	Revised for accuracy; corrected pole height range.
2	5.5-10 2 nd paragraph	5.5.1.1 Coulter’s saltbush	SDG&E will survey for this species during the <u>focused plant surveys required per MM BIO-1 project-wide verification survey</u> prior to construction activities to avoid potential impacts to this species.	Revised for accuracy; corrected timing of survey.
3	5.5-10 3 rd paragraph	5.5.1.1 San Diego gumplant	SDG&E will survey for this species during the <u>focused plant surveys required per MM BIO-1 project-wide verification survey</u> prior to construction activities to avoid potential impacts to this species.	Same as comment 2; Revised for accuracy; corrected timing of survey.
4	5.5-26 4 th paragraph	5.5.1.5 – Preserve Areas	The <u>City-County</u> of San Diego <u>has prepared is in the process of preparing</u> the North and East County MSCP to ensure the long-term survival of the California gnatcatcher and other sensitive coastal sage scrub-dependent plant and animal species in accordance with state-sanctioned NCCP program guidelines, as well as other species and habitats in the region.	Revised for accuracy. North and East County MSCP have not been finalized; MSCP is County of San Diego (not City).
5	5.5-30 4 th paragraph	5.5.2 – Streambed Alteration Agreement	CDFW must be notified prior to beginning any activity that would <u>substantially</u> obstruct or divert the natural flow of, use material from, or deposit or dispose of material into a river, stream, or lake, <u>under Section 1602 of the California Fish & Game Code through the Streambed Alteration Agreement notification process, whether permanent, intermittent, or ephemeral waterbodies under Section 1602 of the California Fish and Game Code.</u>	Revised for accuracy. Legal threshold for notification is “substantial” obstruction or diversion; Permanent, intermittent or ephemeral waterbodies are not referenced in the code. The CDFW takes jurisdiction of all rivers, lakes and streambeds.
6	5.5-32 Last paragraph	5.5.2 – SDG&E NCCP	The <u>69+</u> operational protocols provided in SDG&E’s NCCP include provisions for personnel training; pre-activity studies; and maintenance, repair, and construction of facilities, including access roads, survey work, and emergency repairs.	Revised for accuracy; SDG&E NCCP includes 69 total operational protocols including 8 measures from the vernal pool clarification document.
7	5.5-38 2 nd paragraph	5.5.3 Special-Status Wildlife (Reptiles)	SDG&E will also implement NCCP operational protocol which requires that pre-activity studies <u>, including focused surveys, are conducted are conducted.</u>	Revised for accuracy; the focused surveys for this project are required by CPUC, not the NCCP.

E1-4a

E1-4b

E1-4c

E1-4d

E1-4e

E1-4f

E1-4g

Draft Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration for San Diego Gas & Electric Company Tie-Line 637 Wood-to-Steel Project (Application No. 13-03-003)

Table 1 – Errata Table

#	Page # and Location	Section	Suggested Revisions	Comments
8	5.5-40/41 Last paragraph	5.53 – Special-Status Wildlife (Avian)	More specifically for temporary impacts, SDG&E will reseed impacted areas and implement a 23 -year monitoring program to determine success. For permanent impacts <u>located within preserve areas</u> , SDG&E will deduct from SDG&E's Conservation Bank at a 12 :1 ratio.	Revised to reflect correct NCCP monitoring program timeframe and deduction ratio.
9	5.5-56	Figure 5.5-1A – Vegetation Communities		Note that SDG&E is the source of Project alignment and pole data only.
10	5.6-4 3 rd paragraph 5.6-9 4 th paragraph	5.6.1 – Cultural Resources 5.6.3 – Impact Discussion	No resources identified are listed or eligible for listing in NRHP.	Revised for accuracy; listing eligibility has not been determined.
11	5.6-10 last paragraph 5.18-3 2 nd paragraph	5.6.3 Environmental Impacts 5.18 – Cultural Resources	Four <u>Two</u> of these resources were deemed not eligible or are isolated artifacts and therefore not eligible.	Clarification to be consistent with Table 5.6-1 which shows two not eligible.
12	5.8-16 1 st paragraph	5.8.3 – Impact Discussion	Because APM-HAZ-2 would also ensure that measures identified in the Cleveland National Forest Fire Plan would be implemented for <u>the entire proposed project portions of the Proposed Project occurring within the Cleveland National Forest</u> , fire hazards due to construction activities would be less than significant (see PEA, Appendix 4.7-B; Cleveland National Forest Fire Plan).	Clarification for consistency with APM-HAZ-2.
13	Attachment	Attachment A-Detailed Alignment Map	Modify pole details as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P20 – from blue to green • P54 – from blue to purple • P103, P104, P105 – from green to blue 	Corrected specific pole details for accuracy.

E1-4h
E1-4i
E1-4j
E1-4k
E1-4l
E1-4m

Response to Comment Letter E1

**San Diego Gas & Electric
Bradley Carter
November 7, 2013**

- E1-1** This comment is noted. The comment provides introduction to the comment letter, overview of the proposed project objectives including fire-hardening of the proposed project alignment, and states support of the project and Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) significance conclusions. The comment does not raise specific issues related to the adequacy of the environmental analysis in the Draft IS/MND; therefore, no additional response is provided or required.
- E1-2** This comment is noted and will be included in the project record for the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to consider during project deliberation. The comment does not raise specific issues related to the adequacy of the environmental analysis in the Draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration; therefore, no additional response is provided or required.
- E1-3** This comment is noted and will be included in the project record for the CPUC to consider during project deliberation. Section 4.6, Construction Activities, of the IS/MND was updated to reflect that helicopter use would include transportation of materials as well as removal of existing wood poles. These edits were added to clarify helicopter use and do not alter the analysis or significance conclusions of the IS/MND, and impacts would remain less than significant. Please also refer to response C1-12, regarding a discussion about helicopter use during construction activities.
- E1-4** Please refer to responses E1-4a through E1-4m.
- E1-4a** The comment is noted, and the revision to Section 5.2.3 has been incorporated into the Final IS/MND. These edits do not alter the analysis or significance conclusions of the IS/MND, and impacts would remain less than significant.
- E1-4b** The comment is noted, and the revision to Section 5.5.1.1 has been incorporated into the Final IS/MND. These edits do not alter the analysis or significance conclusions of the IS/MND, and impacts would remain less than significant.
- E1-4c** The comment is noted, and the revision to Section 5.5.1.1 has been incorporated into the Final IS/MND. These edits do not alter the analysis or significance conclusions of the IS/MND, and impacts would remain less than significant.
- E1-4d** The comment is noted, and the revision to Section 5.5.1.5 has been incorporated into the Final IS/MND. Please also refer to response C1-5.

These edits do not alter the analysis or significance conclusions of the IS/MND, and impacts would remain less than significant.

- E1-4e** The comment is noted, and the revision to Section 5.5.2 has been incorporated into the Final IS/MND. These edits do not alter the analysis or significance conclusions of the IS/MND, and impacts would remain less than significant.
- E1-4f** The comment is noted, and the revision to Section 5.5.2 has been incorporated into the Final IS/MND. These edits do not alter the analysis or significance conclusions of the IS/MND, and impacts would remain less than significant.
- E1-4g** The comment is noted, and the revision to Section 5.5.3 has been incorporated into the Final IS/MND. These edits do not alter the analysis or significance conclusions of the IS/MND, and impacts would remain less than significant.
- E1-4h** The comment is noted, and the revision to Section 5.5.3 has been incorporated into the Final IS/MND. These edits do not alter the analysis or significance conclusions of the IS/MND, and impacts would remain less than significant.
- E1-4i** The recommended source revision was not incorporated as the vegetation communities' data layer was provided in SDG&E's May 21, 2013 response to CPUC's data request no. 1. Figures 5.5-1A through 5.5-1I of the IS/MND have been updated to reference the data request response. This edit does not alter the analysis or significance conclusions of the IS/MND, and impacts would remain less than significant.
- E1-4j** The comment is noted, and the revision to Section 5.5.3 has been incorporated into the Final IS/MND. These edits do not alter the analysis or significance conclusions of the IS/MND, and impacts would remain less than significant.
- E1-4k** The recommended revision was not incorporated because there were four identified resources that were found to be not eligible. Two of these resources (P-37-028661 and P-37-028670) could not be located during the time field surveys were conducted; therefore, they are not included in Table 1 of the Cultural Resources report (resources inventory table) and are not included in Table 5.6-1 of the MND. A footnote has been included in Table 5.6-1 clarifying this. This addition does not alter the analysis or significance conclusions of the IS/MND, and impacts would remain less than significant.
- E1-4l** The comment is noted, and the revision to Section 5.8.3 has been incorporated into the Final IS/MND. These edits do not alter the analysis

or significance conclusions of the IS/MND, and impacts would remain less than significant.

E1-4m The comment is noted, and the revision to Attachment A, Detailed Alignment Map, has been incorporated into the Final IS/MND. These edits do not alter the analysis or significance conclusions of the IS/MND, and impacts would remain less than significant.

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Comment Letter F1



The Protect Our Communities Foundation
P.O. Box 305
Santa Ysabel, CA 92070
Please send correspondence to kelly@kellyfuller.net

November 15, 2013

Lon Payne, CPUC Project Manager
California Public Utilities Commission
c/o Dudek
605 Third Street
Encinitas, California 92024
Sent via Electronic Mail: TL637woodtosteel@dudek.com, Lon.Payne@cpuc.ca.gov

Subject: A. 13-03-003: SDG&E TL637--Quality of Golden Eagle Surveys

Dear Mr. Payne:

I am writing to submit substantive new information regarding SDG&E's TL-637 wood to steel project (Project) on behalf of The Protect Our Communities Foundation (POC).

In POC's comments on the Project, we raised concerns that the Project's environmental review relied on Golden Eagle surveys that were done for SDG&E's Sunrise Powerlink project. These surveys are not available to the public, so the public cannot assess the quality or accuracy of them.¹ Furthermore, the surveys were conducted by Wildlife Research Institute under the direction of David Bittner, a biologist whose work has since come under scrutiny following his conviction for violation of the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act.²

POC would like to draw the California Public Utility Commission's (CPUC's) attention to information about SDG&E's Sunrise Powerlink Golden Eagle surveys that we received through a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request. (See attachments.) Because we only learned of the attached information this week, we were unable to include it with our TL-637 comment letter of November 7, 2013. We present it to you now.

In December 2011 emails, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and U.S. Forest Service (FS) staff raised concerns that Bittner and his staff apparently missed a pair of Golden Eagles during their Sunrise

¹ POC sought access to the surveys from both SDG&E and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Service requested that POC attempt to obtain the surveys from SDG&E. POC asked SDG&E twice for the surveys, and stated it would be willing to look at redacted surveys if SDG&E felt that was necessary to protect eagles (for example, redacting the exact location of eagle nests). SDG&E refused both of POC's requests.

² See the government's sentencing memo, available at <http://www.kcei.org/news/rewire/Bittner.sent.mem.11ed6-27-13.pdf>.

F1-1

Powerlink Golden Eagle surveys. (Attachments 1 and 2.) These emails also state that Bittner identified as a Red-tailed Hawk's nest what a FS biologist later identified as a raven's nest.³

Furthermore, according to a raptor expert at FWS (Dr. Joel Pagel) and a forest biologist at the FS (Kirsten Winter), Bittner and the staff he supervised appear not to have followed the protocol for conducting Golden Eagle surveys, despite he and SDG&E having said they did. (Attachment 3.) As a result, "this may make some of their GOEA [Golden Eagle] observations and reports invalid."⁴ In addition, some of the surveys that were conducted by staff working under Bittner's supervision were apparently invalid because the staff were not adequately qualified to perform them. (Attachment 3.)

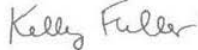
Emails that the public is able to access through FOIA are only a fraction of what agencies actually know. FWS and FS likely have more information about problems related to the conduct of SDG&E's Sunrise Powerlink Golden Eagle surveys. However, these emails are enough to show that there is legitimate reason for the public to question the use of the Sunrise Powerlink Golden Eagle surveys in the TL-637 power line proceeding. They also demonstrate that the CPUC should not continue to allow the Sunrise Powerlink Golden Eagle surveys to be utilized in environmental reviews.

POC believes that the CPUC can best take care of this situation and create greater public confidence in its decision regarding the TL-637 line by:

1. folding the TL-637 Project back into the Master Special Use Permit Project from which it was improperly separated (as was discussed in POC's comments on the draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration); and
2. requiring new Golden Eagle surveys to be conducted by a different biological consulting group, one without ties to David Bittner.

Thank you for considering this substantive new information.

Sincerely yours,



Kelly Fuller, Consultant to The Protect Our Communities Foundation
(619) 659-5133
kelly@kellyfuller.net

³ Joel Pagel's email of 12/20/11 states, "This is the eagle pair that Bittner has missed during his work related to Sunrise; and the same site that he indicated that the photograph was of a rtha nest with a rtha attending." (rtha is the American Ornithologists' Union's abbreviation for Red-tailed Hawk.) Heather Beeler's email of 12/22/11 states, "FYI, I talked with Jeff Wells, Biologist for the Cleveland National Forest, yesterday. He visited the nest site reported and pictured in last weeks [sic] news article last Saturday and confirmed the reported "eagles nest" is a ravens nest. He also confirms a pair of eagles is utilizing the area."

⁴ See Joel Pagel's email of 4/22/11 and Kirsten Winter's email of 4/20/11. Pagel is the first-named author of the FWS Golden Eagle survey protocol, so is unusually qualified to judge what does and does not follow the protocol.

F1-1
Cont.

From: Joel Pagel
To: cbattistone@dfg.ca.gov; Eric Kershner
Cc: Eric.Porter
Subject: Fw: McCain Valley Golden Eagles
Date: 12/20/2011 01:24 PM

This is the eagle pair that Bittner has missed during his work related to Sunrise; and the same site that he indicated that the photograph was of a rtha nest with a rtha attending.

----- Forwarded by Joel Pagel/CFWO/R1/FWS/DOI on 12/20/2011 01:22 PM -----

"Winter, Kirsten -FS"
<kwinter@fs.fed.us>

12/20/2011 01:15 PM

To "Karen Wilson (KWilson@semprautilities.com)" <KWilson@semprautilities.com>, "Steward, M Daniel (msteward@blm.gov)" <msteward@blm.gov>, "Erinn Wilson (ewilson@dfg.ca.gov)" <ewilson@dfg.ca.gov>, "Eric.Porter@fws.gov" <Eric.Porter@fws.gov>, "Joel Pagel (Joel_Pagel@fws.gov)" <Joel_Pagel@fws.gov>, "Paul, Robert -FS" <rpaul@fs.fed.us>, Carie Battistone <CBATTISTONE@dfg.ca.gov>

cc "Tobin, Richard -FS" <rtobin@fs.fed.us>, "Hawkins, Robert -FS" <rhawkins@fs.fed.us>

Subject McCain Valley Golden Eagles

Greetings,

Our biologist Jeff Wells was out at McCain Valley over the weekend and he confirmed that there is a pair of Golden Eagles that appears to be resident there (as previously reported in East County Magazine). Based on their location relative to other known pairs, it looks like this is a distinct territory. Jeff wasn't able to locate a nest during his visit. I think that Dave Bittner is scheduled to do some follow up. It will be important to locate and protect the nest site, if present, as this pair may be affected by Sunrise and other energy projects in the area. We should have a map and more details shortly.

Best regards,
Kirsten

Kirsten Winter
Forest Biologist
858 674 2956

Cleveland National Forest
10845 Rancho Bernardo Road #200
San Diego, CA 92127

F1-1
Cont.



Heather Beeler /R8/FWS/DOI
12/22/2011 11:53 AM

To: tpogacni@blm.gov, Amy Fesnock/CASO/CA/BLM/DOI@BLM, Larry LaPre/CASO/CA/BLM/DOI@BLM
cc: Karen Goebel/CFWO/R1/FWS/DOI@FWS, Jesse Bennett/CFWO/R1/FWS/DOI@FWS, Amedee Brickey/R8/FWS/DOI@FWS, Tom
bcc:
Subject: Fw: McCain Valley eagle reports (in vicinity of Sunrise Power Link and Tule Wind Project)

FYI, I talked with Jeff Wells, Biologist for the Cleveland National Forest, yesterday. He visited the nest site reported and pictured in last weeks news article last Saturday and confirmed the reported "eagles nest" is a ravens nest. He also confirms a pair of eagles is utilizing the area. Please see the email string below for additional details.

Heather

Heather Beeler
Eagle Permit Specialist
US Fish and Wildlife Service
2800 Cottage Way W-2606
Sacramento, CA 95825
(916) 414-6651
(916) 414-6486 (fax)

— Forwarded by Heather Beeler/R8/FWS/DOI on 12/22/2011 10:44 AM —



"Winter, Kirsten -FS"
<kwinter@fs.fed.us>
12/22/2011 06:49 AM

To: "Heather_Beeler@fws.gov" <Heather_Beeler@fws.gov>
cc:
Subject: FW: McCain Valley eagle reports

fyi will send you some of the preceding correspondence as well

From: Wilson, Karen D. [mailto:KWilson@semprautilities.com]
Sent: Wednesday, December 21, 2011 1:15 PM
To: Wells, Jeffrey -FS; Winter, Kirsten -FS
Cc: Colton, Alan F.; Cheever, Dayle M; Haines, Don Edward
Subject: RE: McCain Valley eagle reports

Hi Jeff and Kirsten,

Here is a map showing the location of the recent golden eagle sighting to the Sunrise Powerlink. This gives us a preliminary feel for the distance between the pair and the Project, although I realize that the pair can travel a long distance. Additional survey work will provide the necessary details.

Thanks,

F1-1
Cont.

Karen

From: Wilson, Karen D.
Sent: Tuesday, December 20, 2011 4:35 PM
To: 'Wells, Jeffrey -FS'; Winter, Kirsten -FS
Cc: Colton, Alan F.; Cheever, Dayle M; Haines, Don Edward
Subject: RE: McCain Valley eagle reports

Thanks Jeff. Although no nest was located, I'm going to map the eagle sighting location to determine its location in relation to the Sunrise Project alignment and surrounding area. Thanks for providing the lat/long.

Karen

From: Wells, Jeffrey -FS [<mailto:jmwells@fs.fed.us>]
Sent: Tuesday, December 20, 2011 4:27 PM
To: Winter, Kirsten -FS; Wilson, Karen D.
Subject: McCain Valley eagle reports

Hi Karen and Kirsten,

This past Sat. I met with the people who had reported the golden eagle sightings in McCain Valley. We hiked out to the location and I checked the immediate area. While there is no golden eagle nests at the location reported, I did confirm that they had actually been seeing a pair of adult golden eagles at this location. We did not observe any eagles Saturday, but they produced photos of the birds that they had taken in previous weeks. I confirmed that they were from that location, and are golden eagles. The site is located approx. 5 to 7 miles from surrounding known eagle territories, including Thing Valley, Canebrake and Carrizo Gorge. While no nest site is known for this area, it is my opinion that this is a possible new or formerly unk. eagle territory. This is due to its distance and location between the other territories and habitat conditions within the area.

I talked to Dave Bittner on Monday, and he agreed that it is possible, but it may be Canebrake pair utilizing this area. he may be correct, but I think it should be further investigated. Dave was going to be doing some work in the area with a helicopter on Tuesday (today) and said he would look around and try and see if he could find any nest sites or birds.

The location of the eagle sightings was 32.47.463N 116.16.771W. They said that they had seen eagles at this location 3 times over the past 3-4 weeks, including the time they took the photos, which were included in the news article.

Attached is a google earth map, showing the location in the center, and the other known eagle territory nesting areas surrounding location.

Jeff

F1-1
Cont.

Jeff Wells
Resource Officer
Palomar Ranger District
Cleveland National Forest
(760) 788-0250 ext. 3342
(760) 803-1301 cell



11-0295 McCain Valley GDEA Sighting.pdf

A vertical double-headed arrow spanning most of the page height, indicating a range or continuation.

F1-1
Cont.

From: [Joel Pagel](#)
To: [cbattistone@dfg.ca.gov](#); [rahella@dfg.ca.gov](#); Eric Kershner
Cc: [Jennifer Miller](#); [Kirsten Winter](#); [Jesse Bennett](#)
Bcc: [Joel Pagel](#)
Subject: FW: WRI eagle surveys
Date: 04/22/2011 09:50 AM

Hello,

Just got off the phone with Kirsten Winter, who is the Forest Biologist for the Cleveland National Forest. She related to me that she has had several discussions with SDGE regarding the Sunrise Powerlink, and their contractor for this project, Dave Bittner.

She has raised the following concern because she believes that GOEA's are being disturbed (e.g. 'take') on her National Forest, and at other locales in southern California. Further, there is heightened sensitivity regarding helicopters because of the incident(s) at GOEA nests with helicopters, SDGE, and the public.

Based on what she said this morning, she found that Bittner and WRI were a) using helicopters in weekly or bi-weekly flights to monitor GOEA nests, b) were taking excessive time at nests photographing the site, and c) were using staff to observe at those sites who were clearly not qualified. Further, she indicated that SDGE and Bittner were indicating that they were adhering to the Pagel et al. (2010) protocol. Per the information that Kirsten relayed to me, please note that the protocol did not recommend using helicopters to monitor sites for chronology with weekly flights, does not recommend lengthy aerial hovering above a nest, and that we are rather adamant about using qualified individuals for aerial and ground observation. I believe that they may not be adhering to the recommended protocol, and as Kirsten has suggested below and attached, this may make some of their GOEA observations and reports invalid.

Kirsten further indicated that Bittner is using helicopters to monitor known peregrine and prairie falcon nest sites, and has been observed hovering in front of those nests for lengthy periods too. These are sites where ground monitoring has already been in progress by the Forest, and a lack of coordination has occurred between Bittner and the Forest/CDFG/FWS. Quite frankly, there is no need to fly a peregrine or prairie site if ground monitoring is already occurring. Peregrines don't like helicopters even more than GOEA or prairies.

I have forwarded Kirsten's emails regarding these issues (below, and two more to follow).

With this note to CDFG (Carie and Regina), and to MB (Eric and Jennifer), it is my opinion based on what was presented to me from Kirsten, that Bittner is not following the protocol, and that his actions may have a strong potential to disturb the birds. After finding a GOEA nest (or peregrine or prairie), ground based monitoring with qualified individuals should be used to obtain further detailed information, and coordination should be occurring with those ground based monitors.

I want to state emphatically that we (Pagel et al. 2010) did not believe that hovering in front of the nest site was going to happen in the manner that Kirsten has described, especially by someone who has purported to be qualified. I am

F1-1
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aware of the aerial techniques first-hand, and the accepted technique is to be at the nest for several seconds (up to 10 or so) and then to bank away and get out of the area. As I have relayed to Carie, longer hovering is not recommended and if necessary, would occur to look for dead chicks, or ascertain other types of nesting failure or problems and may be up to 30 seconds. Hovering for long periods (15-30 seconds) should NOT be used to get the basic nesting information.

I pass this information on to you all so that you may decide the next course of action. Any contact with OLE or LEO's should be done by you.

I strongly believe that Kirstin may be alerting us to only a small portion of a much larger suite of actions which may be deleterious to GOEA that may be conducted by 'experienced' contractors, as well as those contractors who are less than experienced. Please call or email Kirsten to get additional information.

thanks,

jeep
Joel E. Pagel, Ph.D.
Raptor Ecologist

----- Forwarded by Joel Pagel/CFWO/R1/FWS/DOI on 04/22/2011 09:24 AM -----

Kirsten Winter
<kwinter@fs.fed.us> To Joel_Pagel@fws.gov, Eric_Kershner@fws.gov
cc
04/22/2011 08:37 AM Subject WRI eagle surveys

F1-1
Cont.

Hi Jeep and Eric,

fyi, based on information we've received from the public, our partners, and our personal observations-it appears that weekly helicopter flights are being used to "monitor" eagle and falcon nests, and considerable time is being spent hovering at nests to take photographs.

Best regards,
Kirsten

Kirsten Winter
Forest Biologist
Cleveland National Forest
10845 Rancho Bernardo Road #200
San Diego, CA 92127
phone: 858-674-2956
FAX: 858-673-6192
email: kwinter@fs.fed.us

----- Forwarded by Kirsten Winter/R5/USDAFS on 04/22/2011 08:32 AM -----

Kirsten

Winter/R5/USDAFS

To "Wilson, Karen D." <KWilson@semprautilities.com>
04/20/2011 10:58 AM cc "rktobin@att.net" <rktobin@att.net>, "rpaul@fs.fed.us" <rpaul@fs.fed.us>, Robert H
Hawkins/WO/USDAFS@FSNOTES
Subject Re: SDG&E: Resumes from WRILink

Hi Karen,

Thanks for sending these resumes.

Regarding helicopter surveys: These should be used for initial inventory in January, February to determine whether nests are active. Helicopter surveys could be done in March/April only if nest activity has not yet been detected. Once nests are found to be active, subsequent monitoring shall be from the ground to minimize disturbance to nesting raptors. The amount of helicopter survey being done currently, and the amount of time being spent at nests is excessive.

Regarding surveyor qualifications:

(FWS protocol calls for 3 years of in-depth experience with eagle surveys to qualify for helicopter surveys, and 2 years of in-depth experience to qualify for ground surveys)

1- the following surveyors are qualified to do helicopter or ground surveys for Golden Eagles:

David Bittner, Jeff Lincer, Chris Meador

2- the following are qualified to do ground surveys, but would need to be accompanied by a more experienced surveyor for helicopter surveys:

Renee Rivard

3- the following surveyors would need to be accompanied by a more experienced surveyor for both ground and helicopter surveys. These surveyors could be allowed to monitor status of known active nests via ground-based observation, but would not be able to make a determination that a nest is not occupied.

James Newland, Daniel Palmer, Brittany Schlotfeldt

Regarding surveys to date these need to be reviewed. It appears that several will not be valid based on the absence of adequately qualified surveyors for specific survey events.

F1-1
Cont.

Best regards,
Kirsten

Kirsten Winter
Forest Biologist
Cleveland National Forest
10845 Rancho Bernardo Road #200
San Diego, CA 92127
phone: 858-674-2956
FAX: 858-673-6192
email: kwinter@fs.fed.us

"Wilson, Karen D."
<KWilson@semprautilities.com>

04/18/2011 07:08 PM

To "Kirsten Winter" <kwinter@fs.fed.us>
cc "rpaul@fs.fed.us" <rpaul@fs.fed.us>, "rktobin@att.net"
<rktobin@att.net>
Subject SDG&E: Resumes from WRI

Hi Kirsten,

Attached are WRI's resumes. I'm glad that they finally came in, but I just wish I had received them prior to our meeting today.

Karen D. Wilson

Senior Environmental Specialist
Sunrise Powerlink
8315 Century Park Court, CP21G
San Diego, Ca 92123-1548
(T): 858.636.3972
(C): 858.761.4390

(F): 858.637.3770 [attachment "DBittner_Resume_March2011.doc" deleted by Kirsten Winter/R5/USDAFS] [attachment "CMeador_Resume_March2011.doc" deleted by Kirsten Winter/R5/USDAFS] [attachment "JLincer_Resume_March2011.doc" deleted by Kirsten Winter/R5/USDAFS] [attachment "JNewland_Resume_March2011.doc" deleted by Kirsten Winter/R5/USDAFS] [attachment "RRivard_Resume_March2011.doc" deleted by Kirsten Winter/R5/USDAFS] [attachment "DPalmer_Resume_March2011.docx" deleted by Kirsten Winter/R5/USDAFS] [attachment "BSchlotfeldt_Resume_March2011.doc" deleted by Kirsten Winter/R5/USDAFS]

F1-1
Cont.

Response to Comment Letter F1

**The Protect Our Communities Foundation
Kelly Fuller
November 15, 2013**

- F1-1** This information is noted and will be included in the project record for the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to consider during project deliberation. Please refer to response D1-3 regarding the validity of Mr. Bittner's data and Response D1-2 regarding environmental analysis of TL 637 and the Master Special Use Permit Project.

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